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WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE.

THE KINDERHOOK EDITION

THE WORKS

OF

WASHINGTON IRVING

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LIFE OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING

IN FIVE VOLUMES

VOLUME III.

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NOTE TO THE THIRD VOLUME.

When the Author commenced the publication of this work, he informed his Publishers that he should probably complete it in three volumes. What he gave as a probability, they understood as a certainty, and worded their advertisements accordingly. His theme has unexpectedly expanded under his pen, and he now lays his third volume before the public, with his task yet unaccomplished. He hopes this may not cause unpleasant disappointment. To present a familiar and truthful picture of the Revolution and the personages concerned in it, required much detail and copious citations, that the scenes might be placed in a proper light, and the characters introduced might speak for themselves, and have space in which to play their parts.

The kindness with which the first two volumes have been received, has encouraged the author to pursue the plan he had adopted, and inspires the hope that the public good-will which has cheered him through so long a period of devious authorship, will continue with him to the approaching close of his career.

Sunnyside, June, 1856.

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THE news of Washington's recrossing the Delaware, and of his subsequent achievements in the Jerseys, had not reached London on the 9th of January. "The affairs of America seem to be drawing to a crisis," writes Edmund Burke. "The Howes are at this time in possession of, or able to awe the whole middle coast of America, from Delaware to the western boundary of Massachusetts Bay; the naval barrier on the side of Canada is broken. A great tract is open for the supply of the troops; the river Hudson opens a way into the heart of the provinces, and nothing

can, in all probability, prevent an early and offensive campaign. What the Americans have done is, in their circumstances, truly astonishing; it is indeed infinitely more than I expected from them. But, having done so much for some short time, I began to entertain an opinion that they might do more. It is now, however, evident that they cannot look standing armies in the face. They are inferior in everything—even in numbers. There seem by the best accounts not to be above ten or twelve thousand men at most in their grand army. The rest are militia, and not wonderfully well composed or disciplined. They decline a general engagement; prudently enough, if their object had been to make the war attend upon a treaty of good terms of subjection; but when they look further, this will not do. An army that is obliged at all times, and in all situations, to decline an engagement, may delay their ruin, but can never defend their country."*

At the time when this was written, the Howes had learnt, to their mortification, that "the mere running through a province, is not subduing it." The British commanders had been outgeneraled, attacked, and defeated. They had nearly been driven out of the Jerseys, and were now hemmed in and held in check by Washington and his handful of men castled among the heights of Morristown. So far from holding possession of the ter-

* Burke's *Works*, vol. v. p. 125.

ritory they had so recently overrun, they were fain to ask safe conduct across it for a convoy to their soldiers captured in battle. It must have been a severe trial to the pride of Cornwallis, when he had to inquire by letter of Washington, whether money and stores could be sent to the Hessians captured at Trenton, and a surgeon and medicines to the wounded at Princeton; and Washington's reply must have conveyed a reproof still more mortifying: No molestation, he assured his lordship, would be offered to the convoy by any part of the regular army under his command; but "*he could not answer for the militia, who were resorting to arms in most parts of the State, and were excessively exasperated at the treatment they had met with from both Hessian and British troops.*"

In fact, the conduct of the enemy had roused the whole country against them. The proclamations and printed protections of the British commanders, on the faith of which the inhabitants in general had stayed at home, and forbore to take up arms, had proved of no avail. The Hessians could not or would not understand them, but plundered friend and foe alike.* The British soldiery often followed their example, and the plunderings of both were at times attended by those brutal outrages on the weaker sex, which inflame the dullest spirits to revenge

* "These rascals plunder all indiscriminately. If they see anything they like, they say, 'Rebel good for Hesse-mans,' and seize upon it for their own use. They have no idea of the distinctions between whig and tory."—*Letter of Hazard the Postmaster.*

The whole State was thus roused against its invaders. In Washington's retreat of more than a hundred miles through the Jerseys, he had never been joined by more than one hundred of its inhabitants; now sufferers of both parties rose as one man to avenge their personal injuries. The late quiet yeomanry armed themselves, and scoured the country in small parties to seize on stragglers, and the militia began to signalize themselves in voluntary skirmishes with regular troops.

In effect, Washington ordered a safe conduct to be given to the Hessian baggage as far as Philadelphia, and to the surgeon and medicines to Princeton, and permitted a Hessian sergeant and twelve men, unarmed, to attend the baggage until it was delivered to their countrymen.

Morristown, where the main army was encamped, had not been chosen by Washington as a permanent post, but merely as a halting-place, where his troops might repose after their excessive fatigues and their sufferings from the inclement season. Further considerations persuaded him that it was well situated for the system of petty warfare which he meditated, and induced him to remain there. It was protected by forests and rugged heights. All approach from the seaboard was rendered difficult and dangerous to a hostile force by a chain of sharp hills, extending from Pluckamin, by Boundbrook and Springfield, to the vicinity of the Passaic River, while various defiles in the rear afforded safer retreats into a fertile and

well-peopled region.* It was nearly equidistant from Amboy, Newark, and Brunswick, the principal posts of the enemy; so that any movement made from them could be met by a counter movement on his part; while the forays and skirmishes by which he might harass them, would school and season his own troops. He had three faithful generals with him: Greene, his reliance on all occasions; swarthy Sullivan, whose excitable temper and quick sensibilities he had sometimes to keep in check by friendly counsels and rebukes, but who was a good officer, and loyally attached to him; and brave, genial, generous Knox, never so happy as when by his side. He had lately been advanced to the rank of brigadier at his recommendation, and commanded the artillery.

Washington's military family at this time was composed of his aides-de-camp, Colonels Meade and Tench Tilghman of Philadelphia, gentlemen of gallant spirit, amiable tempers, and cultivated manners; and his secretary, Colonel Robert H. Harrison of Maryland—the "old secretary," as he was familiarly called among his associates, and by whom he was described as "one in whom every man had confidence, and by whom no man was deceived."

Washington's head-quarters at first were in what was called the Freemason's Tavern, on the north side of the village green. His troops were encamped about the

* Willkinson's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 149.

vicinity of the village, at first in tents, until they could build log huts for shelter against the winter's cold. The main encampment was near Bottle Hill, in a sheltered valley which was thickly wooded, and had abundant springs. It extended southeasterly from Morristown; and was called the Lowantica Valley, from the Indian name of a beautiful, limpid brook which ran through it, and lost itself in a great swamp.*

The enemy being now concentrated at New Brunswick and Amboy, General Putnam was ordered by Washington to move from Crosswicks to Princeton, with the troops under his command. He was instructed to draw his forage as much as possible from the neighborhood of Brunswick, about eighteen miles off, thereby contributing to distress the enemy; to have good scouting parties continually on the look-out; to keep nothing with him but what could be moved off at a moment's warning, and, if compelled to leave Princeton, to retreat towards the mountains, so as to form a junction with the forces at Morristown.

Putnam had with him but a few hundred men. "You will give out your strength to be twice as great as it is," writes Washington; a common expedient with him in those times of scanty means. Putnam acted up to the advice. A British officer, Captain Macpherson, was lying desperately wounded at Princeton, and Putnam, in the

* Notes of the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle, MS.

kindness of his heart, was induced to send in a flag to Brunswick in quest of a friend and military comrade of the dying man, to attend him in his last moments and make his will. To prevent the weakness of the garrison from being discovered, the visitor was brought in after dark. Lights gleamed in all the college windows, and in the vacant houses about the town; the handful of troops capable of duty were marched hither and thither, and backward and forward, and paraded about to such effect, that the visitor on his return to the British camp, reported the force under the old general to be at least five thousand strong.*

Cantonments were gradually formed between Princeton and the Highlands of the Hudson, which made the left flank of Washington's position, and where General Heath had command. General Philemon Dickinson, who commanded the New Jersey militia, was stationed on the west side of Millstone River, near Somerset Court-house, one of the nearest posts to the enemy's camp at Brunswick. A British foraging party, of five or six hundred strong, sent out by Cornwallis with forty wagons and upward of a hundred draught horses, mostly of the English breed, having collected sheep and cattle about the country, were sacking a mill on the opposite side of the river, where a large quantity of flour was deposited. While thus employed, Dickinson set upon them with a force

* Sparks' *Am. Biography*, vol. vii. p. 196.

equal in number, but composed of raw militia and fifty Philadelphia riflemen. He dashed through the river, waist deep, with his men, and charged the enemy so suddenly and vigorously, that, though supported by three field-pieces, they gave way, left their convoy, and retreated so precipitately, that he made only nine prisoners. A number of killed and wounded were carried off by the fugitives on light wagons.*

These exploits of the militia were noticed with high encomiums by Washington, while at the same time he was rigid in prohibiting and punishing the excesses into which men are apt to run when suddenly clothed with military power. Such is the spirit of a general order issued at this time. "The general prohibits, in both the militia and continental troops, the infamous practice of plundering the inhabitants under the specious pretense of their being tories. . . . . It is our business to give protection and support to the poor distressed inhabitants, not to multiply and increase their calamities." After the publication of this order, all excesses of this kind were to be punished in the severest manner.

To counteract the proclamation of the British commissioners, promising amnesty to all in rebellion who should, in a given time, return to their allegiance, Washington now issued a counter proclamation (Jan. 25th), commanding every person who had subscribed a declara-

* Washington to the President of Congress. Also note to Sparks, vol. iv. p. 290.

tion of fidelity to Great Britain, or taken an oath of allegiance, to repair within thirty days to head-quarters, or the quarters to the nearest general officer of the continental army or of the militia, and there take the oath of allegiance to the United States of America, and give up any protection, certificate, or passport he might have received from the enemy; at the same time granting full liberty to all such as preferred the interest and protection of Great Britain to the freedom and happiness of their country, forthwith to withdraw themselves and families within the enemy's lines. All who should neglect or refuse to comply with this order were to be considered adherents to the crown, and treated as common enemies.

This measure met with objections at the time, some of the timid or over-cautious thinking it inexpedient; others, jealous of the extraordinary powers vested in Washington, questioning whether he had not transcended these powers and exercised a degree of despotism.

The small-pox, which had been fatally prevalent in the preceding year, had again broken out, and Washington feared it might spread through the whole army. He took advantage of the interval of comparative quiet to have his troops inoculated. Houses were sĕt apart in various places as hospitals for inoculation, and a church was appropriated for the use of those who had taken the malady in the natural way. Among these the ravages were frightful. The traditions of the place and neighborhood give lamentable pictures of the distress caused

by this loathsome disease in the camp and in the villages, wherever it had not been parried by inoculation.

"Washington," we are told, "was not an unmoved spectator of the griefs around him, and might be seen in Hanover and in Lowantica Valley, cheering the faith and inspiring the courage of his suffering men."* It was this paternal care and sympathy which attached his troops personally to him. They saw that he regarded them, not with the eye of a general, but of a patriot, whose heart yearned towards them as countrymen suffering in one common cause.

A striking contrast was offered throughout the winter and spring, between the rival commanders, Howe at New York, and Washington at Morristown. Howe was a soldier by profession. War, with him, was a career. The camp was, for the time, country and home. Easy and indolent by nature, of convivial and luxurious habits, and somewhat addicted to gaming, he found himself in good quarters at New York, and was in no hurry to leave them. The tories rallied around him. The British merchants residing there regarded him with profound devotion. His officers, too, many of them young men of rank and fortune, gave a gayety and brilliancy to the place; and the wealthy royalists forgot in a round of dinners, balls, and assemblies, the hysterical alarms they had once experienced under the military sway of Lee.

* Notes of the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle, MS.

Washington, on the contrary, was a patriot soldier, grave, earnest, thoughtful, self-sacrificing. War, to him, was a painful remedy, hateful in itself, but adopted for a great national good. To the prosecution of it all his pleasures, his comforts, his natural inclinations and private interests were sacrificed; and his chosen officers were earnest and anxious like himself, with their whole thoughts directed to the success of the magnanimous struggle in which they were engaged.

So, too, the armies were contrasted. The British troops, many of them, perchance, slightly metamorphosed from vagabonds into soldiers, all mere men of the sword, were well clad, well housed, and surrounded by all the conveniences of a thoroughly appointed army with a "rebel country" to forage. The American troops for the most part were mere yeomanry, taken from their rural homes; ill sheltered, ill clad, ill fed, and ill paid, with nothing to reconcile them to their hardships but love for the soil they were defending, and the inspiring thought that it was *their country*. Washington, with paternal care, endeavored to protect them from the depraving influences of the camp. "Let vice and immorality of every kind be discouraged as much as possible in your brigade," writes he in a circular to his brigadier-generals; "and, as a chaplain is allowed to each regiment, see that the men regularly attend divine worship. Gaming of every kind is expressly forbidden, as being the foundation of evil, and the cause of many a brave and gallant officer's ruin."

CHAPTER II.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.—CASE OF COLONEL ETHAN ALLEN. — OF GENERAL LEE. — CORRESPONDENCE OF WASHINGTON WITH SIR WILLIAM HOWE ABOUT EXCHANGES OF PRISONERS.—REFEREES APPOINTED. — LETTERS OF LEE FROM NEW YORK.— CASE OF COLONEL CAMPBELL. — WASHINGTON'S ADVICE TO CONGRESS ON THE SUBJECT OF RETALIATION.— HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD HOWE ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.—THE HORRORS OF THE JERSEY PRISON-SHIP AND THE SUGAR-HOUSE.

A CARTEL for the exchange of prisoners had been a subject of negotiation previous to the affair of Trenton, without being adjusted. The British commanders were slow to recognize the claims to equality of those they considered rebels; Washington was tenacious in holding them up as patriots ennobled by their cause.

Among the cases which came up for attention was that of Ethan Allen, the brave but eccentric captor of Ticonderoga. His daring attempts in the "path of renown" had cost him a world of hardships. Thrown into irons as a felon, threatened with a halter, carried to England to be tried for treason, confined in Pendennis Castle, re-transported to Halifax, and now a prisoner in New York. "I have suffered everything short of death," writes he

to the Assembly of his native State, Connecticut. He had, however, recovered health and suppleness of limb, and with them all his swelling spirit and swelling rhetoric. "I am fired," writes he, "with adequate indignation to revenge both my own and my country's wrongs. I am experimentally certain I have fortitude sufficient to face the invaders of America in the place of danger, spread with all the horrors of war." And he concludes with one of his magniloquent, but really sincere expressions of patriotism: "Provided you can hit upon some measure to procure my liberty, I will appropriate my remaining days, and freely hazard my life in the service of the colony, and maintaining the American Empire. I thought to have enrolled my name in the list of illustrious American heroes, but was nipped in the bud!"

Honest Ethan Allen! his name will ever stand enrolled on that list; not illustrious, perhaps, but eminently popular.

His appeal to his native State had produced an appeal to Congress, and Washington had been instructed, considering his long imprisonment, to urge his exchange. This had scarce been urged, when tidings of the capture of General Lee presented a case of still greater importance to be provided for. "I feel much for his misfortune," writes Washington, "and am sensible that in his captivity our country has lost a warm friend and an able officer." By direction of Congress, he had sent in a flag

to inquire about Lee's treatment, and to convey him a sum of money. This was just previous to the second crossing of the Delaware.

Lee was now reported to be in rigorous confinement in New York, and treated with harshness and indignity. The British professed to consider him a deserter, he having been a lieutenant-colonel in their service, although he alleged that he had resigned his commission before joining the American army. Two letters which he addressed to General Howe, were returned to him unopened, inclosed in a cover directed to *Lieutenant-colonel Lee.*

On the 13th of January, Washington addressed the following letter to Sir William Howe. "I am directed by Congress to propose an exchange of five of the Hessian field-officers taken at Trenton for Major-general Lee; or if this proposal should not be accepted, to demand his liberty upon parole, within certain bounds, as has ever been granted to your officers in our custody. I am informed, upon good authority, that your reason for keeping him hitherto in stricter confinement than usual is, that you do not look upon him in the light of a common prisoner of war, but as a deserter from the British service, as his resignation has never been accepted, and that you intend to try him as such by a court-martial. I will not undertake to determine how far this doctrine may be justifiable among yourselves, but I must give you warning that Major-general Lee is looked upon as an officer

belonging to, and under the protection of the United Independent States of America, and that any violence you may commit upon his life and liberty, will be severely retaliated upon the lives or liberties of the British officers, or those of their foreign allies in our hands."

In this letter he likewise adverted to the treatment of American prisoners in New York; several who had recently been released, having given the most shocking account of the barbarities they had experienced, "which their miserable, emaciated countenances confirmed."— "I would beg," added he, "that some certain rule of conduct towards prisoners may be settled; and, if you are determined to make captivity as distressing as possible, let me know it, that we may be upon equal terms, for your conduct shall regulate mine."

Sir William, in reply, proposed to send an officer of rank to Washington, to confer upon a mode of exchange and subsistence of prisoners. "This expedient," observes he, "appearing to me effectual for settling all differences, will, I hope, be the means of preventing a repetition of the improper terms in which your letter is expressed and founded on the grossest misrepresentations. I shall not make any further comment upon it, than to assure you, that your threats of retaliating upon the innocent such punishment as may be decreed in the circumstances of Mr. Lee by the laws of his country, will not divert me from my duty in any respect; at the same time, you may rest satisfied that the proceedings against

him will not be precipitated; and I trust that, in this, or in any other event in the course of my command, you will not have just cause to accuse me of inhumanity, prejudice, or passion."

Sir William, in truth, was greatly perplexed with respect to Lee, and had written to England to Lord George Germaine for instructions in the case. "General Lee," writes he, "being considered in the light of a deserter, is kept a close prisoner; but I do not bring him to trial, as a doubt has arisen, whether, by a public resignation of his half-pay prior to his entry into the rebel army, he was amenable to the military law as a deserter."

The proposal of Sir William, that all disputed points relative to the exchange and subsistence of prisoners should be adjusted by referees, led to the appointment of two officers for the purpose; Colonel Walcott by General Howe, and Colonel Harrison, "the old secretary," by Washington. In the contemplated exchanges was that of one of the Hessian field-officers for Colonel Ethan Allen.

The haughty spirit of Lee had experienced a severe humiliation in the late catastrophe; his pungent and caustic humor is at an end. In a letter addressed shortly afterwards to Washington, and inclosing one to Congress which Lord and General Howe had permitted him to send, he writes, "as the contents are of the last importance to me, and perhaps not less so to the community, I most earnestly entreat, my dear general, that you will

despatch it immediately, and order the Congress to be as expeditious as possible."

The letter contained a request that two or three gentlemen might be sent immediately to New York, to whom he would communicate what he conceived to be of the greatest importance. "If my own interests were alone at stake," writes he, "I flatter myself that the Congress would not hesitate a single instant in acquiescing in my request; but this is far from the case; the interests of the public are equally concerned. . . . . Lord and General Howe will grant a safe conduct to the gentlemen deputed."

The letter having been read in Congress, Washington was directed to inform General Lee that they were pursuing and would continue to pursue every means in their power to provide for his personal safety, and to obtain his liberty; but that they considered it improper to send any of their body to communicate with him, and could not perceive how it would tend to his advantage or the interest of the public.

Lee repeated his request, but with no better success. He felt this refusal deeply; as a brief, sad note to Washington indicates.

"It is a most unfortunate circumstance for myself, and I think not less so for the public, that Congress have not thought proper to comply with my request. It could not possibly have been attended with any ill consequences,

and might with good ones. At least it was an indulgence which I thought my situation entitled me to. But I am unfortunate in everything, and this stroke is the severest I have yet experienced. God send you a different fate. Adieu, my dear general.

"Yours most truly and affectionately,

"CHARLES LEE."

How different from the humorous, satirical, self-confident tone of his former letters. Yet Lee's actual treatment was not so harsh as had been represented. He was in close confinement, it is true; but three rooms had been fitted up for his reception in the Old City Hall of New York, having nothing of the look of a prison excepting that they were secured by bolts and bars.

Congress, in the meantime, had resorted to their threatened measure of retaliation. On the 20th of February, they had resolved that the Board of War be directed immediately to order the five Hessian field-officers and Lieutenant-colonel Campbell into safe and close custody, "it being the unalterable resolution of Congress to retaliate on them the same punishment as may be inflicted on the person of General Lee."

The Colonel Campbell here mentioned had commanded one of General Fraser's battalions of Highlanders, and had been captured on board of a transport in Nantasket road, in the preceding summer. He was a member of Parliament, and a gentleman of fortune. Retaliation was

carried to excess in regard to him, for he was thrown into the common jail at Concord in Massachusetts.

From his prison he made an appeal to Washington, which at once touched his quick sense of justice. He immediately wrote to the council of Massachusetts Bay quoting the words of the resolution of Congress. "By this you will observe," adds he, "that *exactly the same treatment* is to be shown to Colonel Campbell and the Hessian officers, that General Howe shows to General Lee, and as he is only confined to a commodious house with genteel accommodations, we have no right or reason to be more severe on Colonel Campbell, who I would wish should upon the receipt of this be removed from his present situation, and be put into a house where he may live comfortably."

In a letter to the President of Congress on the following day, he gives his moderating counsels on the whole subject of retaliation. "Though I sincerely commiserate," writes he, "the misfortunes of General Lee, and feel much for his present unhappy situation, yet with all possible deference to the opinion of Congress, I fear that these resolutions will not have the desired effect, are founded on impolicy, and will, if adhered to, produce consequences of an extensive and melancholy nature." . . . .

"The balance of prisoners is greatly against us, and a general regard to the happiness of the whole should mark our conduct. Can we imagine that our enemies

will not mete the same punishments, the same indignities, the same cruelties, to those belonging to us, in their possession, that we impose on theirs in our power? Why should we suppose them to possess more humanity than we have ourselves? Or why should an ineffectual attempt to relieve the distresses of one brave, unfortunate man, involve many more in the same calamities? . . . . Suppose," continues he, "the treatment prescribed for the Hessians should be pursued, will it not establish what the enemy have been aiming to effect by every artifice and the grossest misrepresentations, I mean an opinion of our enmity towards them, and of the cruel treatment they experience, when they fall into our hands, a prejudice which we on our part have heretofore thought it politic to suppress, and to root out by every act of lenity and of kindness?"

"Many more objections," added he, "might be subjoined, were they material. I shall only observe, that the present state of the army, if it deserves that name, will not authorize the language of retaliation, or the style of menace. This will be conceded by all who know that the whole of our force is weak and trifling, and composed of militia (very few regular troops excepted) whose service is on the eve of expiring."

In a letter to Mr. Robert Morris also, he writes: "I wish, with all my heart, that Congress had gratified General Lee in his request. If not too late I wish they would do it still. I can see no possible evil that can re-

sult from it; some good, I think, might. The request to see a gentleman or two came from the *general*, not from the commissioners; there could have been no harm, therefore, in hearing what *he* had to say on *any* subject, especially as he had declared that his own personal interest was deeply concerned. The resolve to put in close confinement Lieutenant-colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers, in order to retaliate upon them General Lee's punishment, is, in my opinion, injurious in every point of view, and must have been entered into without due attention to the consequences. . . . . If the resolve of Congress respecting General Lee strikes you in the same point of view it has done me, I could wish you would signify as much to that body, as I really think it fraught with every evil."

Washington was not always successful in instilling his wise moderation into public councils. Congress adhered to their vindictive policy, merely directing that no other hardships should be inflicted on the captive officers, than such confinement as was necessary to carry their resolve into effect. As to their refusal to grant the request of Lee, Robert Morris surmised they were fearful of the injurious effect that might be produced in the court of France, should it be reported that members of Congress visited General Lee, by permission of the British commissioners. There were other circumstances beside the treatment of General Lee, to produce this indignant sensibility on the part of Congress. Accounts were rife at

this juncture, of the cruelties and indignities almost invariably experienced by American prisoners at New York; and an active correspondence on the subject was going on between Washington and the British commanders, at the same time with that regarding General Lee.

The captive Americans who had been in the naval service were said to be confined, officers and men, in prison-ships, which from their loathsome condition, and the horrors and sufferings of all kinds experienced on board of them, had acquired the appellation of *floating hells.* Those who had been in the land service, were crowded into jails and dungeons like the vilest malefactors; and were represented as pining in cold, in filth, in hunger and nakedness.

"Our poor devoted soldiers," writes an eye-witness, "were scantily supplied with provisions of bad quality, wretchedly clothed, and destitute of sufficient fuel, if indeed they had any. Disease was the inevitable consequence, and their prisons soon became hospitals. A fatal malady was generated, and the mortality, to every heart not steeled by the spirit of party, was truly deplorable."* According to popular account, the prisoners confined on shipboard, and on shore, were perishing by hundreds.

A statement made by Captain Gamble, recently confined on board of a prison-ship, had especially roused the ire of Congress, and by their directions had produced a

* Graydon's *Memoirs,* p. 232.

letter from Washington to Lord Howe. "I am sorry," writes he, "that I am under the disagreeable necessity of troubling your lordship with a letter, almost wholly on the subject of the cruel treatment which our officers and men in the naval department, who are unhappy enough to fall into your hands, receive on board the prison-ships in the harbor of New York." After specifying the case of Captain Gamble, and adding a few particulars, he proceeds: "From the opinion have ever been taught to entertain of your lordship's humanity, I will not suppose that you are privy to proceedings of so cruel and unjustifiable a nature; and I hope, that, upon making the proper inquiry, you will have the matter so regulated, that the unhappy persons whose lot is captivity, may not in future have the miseries of cold, disease, and famine, added to their other misfortunes. You may call us rebels, and say that we deserve no better treatment; but remember, my lord, that, supposing us rebels, we still have feelings as keen and sensible as loyalists, and will, if forced to it, most assuredly retaliate upon those upon whom we look as the unjust invaders of our rights, liberties, and properties. I should not have said thus much, but my injured countrymen have long called upon me to endeavor to obtain a redress of their grievances, and I should think myself as culpable as those who inflict such severities upon them, were I to continue silent," etc.

Lord Howe, in reply (January 17), expressed himself

surprised at the matter and language of Washington's letter, "so different from the liberal vein of sentiment he had been habituated to expect on every occasion of personal intercourse or correspondence with him." He was surprised, too, that "the idle and unnatural report" of Captain Gamble, respecting the dead and dying, and the neglect of precautions against infection, should meet with any credit. "Attention to preserve the lives of these men," writes he, "whom we esteem the misled subjects of the king, is a duty as binding on us, where we are able from circumstances to execute it with effect, as any you can plead for the interest you profess in their welfare."

He denied that prisoners were ill treated in his particular department (the naval). They had been allowed the general liberty of the prison-ship, until a successful attempt of some to escape, had rendered it necessary to restrain the rest within such limits as left the commanding parts of the ship in possession of the guard. They had the same provisions in quality and quantity that were furnished to the seamen of his own ship. The want of cleanliness was the result of their own indolence and neglect. In regard to health, they had the constant attendance of an American surgeon, a fellow-prisoner; who was furnished with medicines from the king's stores; and the visits of the physician of the fleet.

"As I abhor every imputation of wanton cruelty in multiplying the miseries of the wretched," observes his

lordship, "or of treating them with needless severity, I have taken the trouble to state these several facts."

In regard to the hint at retaliation, he leaves it to Washington to act therein as he should think fit; but adds he grandly, "the innocent at my disposal will not have any severities to apprehend from me on that account."

We have quoted this correspondence the more freely, because it is on a subject deeply worn into the American mind; and about which we have heard too many particulars, from childhood upwards, from persons of unquestionable veracity, who suffered in the cause, to permit us to doubt about the fact. The *Jersey Prison-ship* is proverbial in our revolutionary history; and the bones of the unfortunate patriots who perished on board, form a monument on the Long Island shore. The horrors of the *Sugar-house* converted into a prison, are traditional in New York; and the brutal tyranny of Cunningham, the provost-marshal, over men of worth confined in the common jail, for the sin of patriotism, has been handed down from generation to generation.

That Lord Howe and Sir William were ignorant of the extent of these atrocities we really believe, but it was their duty to be well informed. War is, at best, a cruel trade, that habituates those who follow it to regard the sufferings of others with indifference. There is not a doubt, too, that a feeling of contumely deprived the patriot prisoners of all sympathy in the early stages of the Revolution. They were regarded as criminals rather

than captives. The stigma of *rebels* seemed to take from them all the indulgences, scanty and miserable as they are, usually granted to prisoners of war. The British officers looked down with haughty contempt upon the American officers, who had fallen into their hands. The British soldiery treated them with insolent scurrility. It seemed as if the very ties of consanguinity rendered their hostility more intolerant, for it was observed that American prisoners were better treated by the Hessians than by the British. It was not until our countrymen had made themselves formidable by their successes that they were treated, when prisoners, with common decency and humanity.

The difficulties arising out of the case of General Lee interrupted the operations with regard to the exchange of prisoners; and gallant men, on both sides, suffered prolonged detention in consequence; and among the number the brave, but ill-starred Ethan Allen.

Lee, in the meantime, remained in confinement, until directions with regard to him should be received from government. Events, however, had diminished his importance in the eyes of the enemy; he was no longer considered the American palladium. "As the capture of the Hessians and the manœuvers against the British took place after the surprise of General Lee," observes a London writer of the day, "we find that he is not the only efficient officer in the American service."*

* *Am. Archives*, 5th Series, iii. 1244.

CHAPTER III.

EXERTIONS TO FORM A NEW ARMY.—CALLS ON THE DIFFERENT STATES.—INSUFFICIENCY OF THE MILITIA.—WASHINGTON'S CARE FOR THE YEOMANRY.—DANGERS IN THE NORTHERN DEPARTMENT.—WINTER ATTACK ON TICONDEROGA APPREHENDED.—EXERTIONS TO REINFORCE SCHUYLER.—PRECARIOUS STATE OF WASHINGTON'S ARMY.—CONJECTURES AS TO THE DESIGNS OF THE ENEMY.—EXPEDITION OF THE BRITISH AGAINST PEEKSKILL.

THE early part of the year brought the annual embarrassments caused by short enlistments. The brief terms of service for which the continental soldiery had enlisted, a few months perhaps, at most a year, were expiring; and the men, glad to be released from camp duty, were hastening to their rustic homes. Militia had to be the dependence until a new army could be raised and organized; and Washington called on the Council of Safety of Pennsylvania, speedily to furnish temporary reinforcements of the kind.

All his officers that could be spared were ordered away, some to recruit, some to collect the scattered men of the different regiments, who were dispersed, he said, almost over the continent. General Knox was sent off to Massachusetts to expedite the raising of a battalion of artillery. Different States were urged to levy and

equip their quotas for the continental army. "Nothing but the united efforts of every State in America," writes he, "can save us from disgrace, and probably from ruin."

Rhode Island is reproached with raising troops for home service before furnishing its supply to the general army. "If each State," writes he, "were to prepare for its own defense independent of each other, they would all be conquered, one by one. *Our success must depend on a firm union and a strict adherence to the general plan.*" *

He deplores the fluctuating state of the army while depending on militia; full one day, almost disbanded the next. "I am much afraid that the enemy, one day or other, taking advantage of one of these temporary weaknesses, will make themselves masters of our magazines of stores, arms, and artillery."

The militia, too, on being dismissed, were generally suffered by their officers to carry home with them the arms with which they had been furnished, so that the armory was in a manner scattered over all the world, and forever lost to the public.

Then an earnest word is spoken by him in behalf of the yeomanry, whose welfare always lay near his heart. "You must be fully sensible," writes he, "of the hardships imposed upon individuals, and how detrimental it

* Letter to Governor Cooke. Sparks, iv. 285.

must be to the public to have farmers and tradesmen frequently called out of the field as militia men, whereby a total stop is put to arts and agriculture, without which we cannot long subsist."

While thus anxiously exerting himself to strengthen his own precarious army, the security of the Northern department was urged upon his attention. Schuyler represented it as in need of reinforcements and supplies of all kinds. He apprehended that Carleton might make an attack upon Ticonderoga, as soon as he could cross Lake Champlain on the ice; that important fortress was under the command of a brave officer, Colonel Anthony Wayne, but its garrison had dwindled down to six or seven hundred men, chiefly New England militia. In the present destitute situation of his department as to troops, Schuyler feared that Carleton might not only succeed in an attempt on Ticonderoga, but might push his way to Albany.

He had written in vain, he said, to the Convention of New York, and to the Eastern States, for reinforcements, and he entreated Washington to aid him with his influence. He wished to have his army composed of troops from as many different States as possible; the Southern people having a greater spirit of discipline and subordination, might, he thought, introduce it among the Eastern people.

He wished also for the assistance of a general officer or two in his department. "I am alone," writes he, "dis-

tracted with a variety of cares, and no one to take part of the burden." *

Although Washington considered a winter attack of the kind specified by Schuyler too difficult and dangerous to be very probable, he urged reinforcements from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, whence they could be furnished most speedily. Massachusetts, in fact, had already determined to send four regiments to Schuyler's aid as soon as possible.

Washington disapproved of a mixture of troops in the present critical juncture, knowing, he said, "the difficulty of maintaining harmony among men from different States, and bringing them to lay aside all attachments and distinctions of a local and provincial nature, and *consider themselves the same people, engaged in the same noble struggle, and having one general interest to defend.*" †

The quota of Massachusetts, under the present arrangement of the army, was fifteen regiments; and Washington ordered General Heath, who was in Massachusetts, to forward them to Ticonderoga as fast as they could be raised.‡

Notwithstanding all Washington's exertions in behalf of the army under his immediate command, it continued to be deplorably in want of reinforcements, and it was necessary to maintain the utmost vigilance at all his

* Schuyler's Letter Book, MS.
† Ibid.
‡ Sparks *Washington's Writings*, iv. 361, note.

posts to prevent his camp from being surprised. The operations of the enemy might be delayed by the bad condition of the roads, and the want of horses to move their artillery, but he anticipated an attack as soon as the roads were passable, and apprehended a disastrous result unless speedily reinforced.

"The enemy," writes he, "must be ignorant of our numbers and situation, or they would never suffer us to remain unmolested, and I almost tax myself with imprudence in committing the fact to paper, lest this letter should fall into other hands than those for which it is intended." And again: "It is not in my power to make Congress fully sensible of the real situation of our affairs, and that it is with difficulty I can keep the life and soul of the army together. In a word, they are at a distance; they think it is but to say *presto, begone*, and everything is done; they seem not to have any conception of the difficulty and perplexity of those who have to execute."

The designs of the enemy being mere matter of conjecture, measures varied accordingly. As the season advanced, Washington was led to believe that Philadelphia would be their first object at the opening of the campaign, and that they would bring round all their troops from Canada by water to aid in the enterprise. Under this persuasion he wrote to General Heath, ordering him to send eight of the Massachusetts battalions to Peekskill instead of Ticonderoga, and he explained his reasons for

so doing in a letter to Schuyler. "At Peekskill," he observed, "they would be well placed to give support to any of the Eastern or Middle States; or to oppose the enemy, should they design to penetrate the country up the Hudson; or to cover New England, should they invade it. Should they move westward, the Eastern and Southern troops could easily form a junction, and this, besides, would oblige the enemy to leave a much stronger garrison at New York. Even should the enemy pursue their first plan of an invasion from Canada, the troops at Peekskill would not be badly placed to reinforce Ticonderoga, and cover the country around Albany." "I am very sure," concludes he, "the operations of this army will in a great degree govern the motions of that in Canada. *If this is held at bay, curbed and confined, the Northern army will not dare attempt to penetrate.*" The last sentence will be found to contain the policy which governed Washington's personal movements throughout the campaign.

On the 18th of March he despatched General Greene to Philadelphia, to lay before Congress such matters as he could not venture to communicate by letter. "He is an able and good officer," writes he, "who has my entire confidence, and is intimately acquainted with my ideas."

Greene had scarce departed when the enemy began to give signs of life. The delay in the arrival of artillery, more than his natural indolence, had kept General Howe from formally taking the field; he now made preparations for the next campaign by detaching troops to destroy the

American deposits of military stores. One of the chief of these was at Peekskill, the very place where Washington had directed Heath to send troops from Massachusetts; and which he thought of making a central point of assemblage. Howe terms it "the port of that rough and mountainous tract called the Manor of Courtlandt." Brigadier-general McDougall had the command of it in the absence of General Heath, but his force did not exceed two hundred and fifty men.

As soon as the Hudson was clear of ice, a squadron of vessels of war and transports, with five hundred troops under Colonel Bird, ascended the river. McDougall had intelligence of the intended attack, and while the ships were making their way across the Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay, exerted himself to remove as much as possible of the provisions and stores to Forts Montgomery and Constitution in the Highlands. On the morning of the 23d, the whole squadron came to anchor in Peekskill Bay; and five hundred men landed in Lent's Cove, on the south side of the bay, whence they pushed forward with four light field-pieces drawn by sailors. On their approach, McDougall set fire to the barracks and principal storehouses, and retreated about two miles to a strong post, commanding the entrance to the Highlands, and the road to Continental Village, the place of the deposits. It was the post which had been noted by Washington in the preceding year, where a small force could make a stand, and hurl down masses of rock on their assailants.

Hence McDougall sent an express to Lieutenant-colonel Marinus Willet, who had charge of Fort Constitution, to hasten to his assistance.

The British, finding the wharf in flames where they had intended to embark their spoils, completed the conflagration, beside destroying several small craft laden with provisions. They kept possession of the place until the following day, when a scouting party, which had advanced towards the entrance of the Highlands, was encountered by Colonel Marinus Willet with a detachment from Fort Constitution, and driven back to the main body after a sharp skirmish, in which nine of the marauders were killed. Four more were slain on the banks of Canopas Creek as they were setting fire to some boats. The enemy were disappointed in the hope of carrying off a great deal of booty, and finding the country around was getting under arms, they contented themselves with the mischief they had done, and reëmbarked in the evening by moonlight, when the whole squadron swept down the Hudson.

CHAPTER IV.

SCHUYLER'S AFFAIRS IN THE NORTHERN DEPARTMENT.—MISUNDERSTANDINGS WITH CONGRESS.—GIVES OFFENSE BY A REPROACHFUL LETTER.—OFFICE OF ADJUTANT-GENERAL OFFERED TO GATES.—DECLINED BY HIM.—SCHUYLER REPRIMANDED BY CONGRESS FOR HIS REPROACHFUL LETTER.—GATES APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND AT TICONDEROGA.—SCHUYLER CONSIDERS HIMSELF VIRTUALLY SUSPENDED.—TAKES HIS SEAT AS A DELEGATE TO CONGRESS, AND CLAIMS A COURT OF INQUIRY.—HAS COMMAND AT PHILADELPHIA.

E have now to enter upon a tissue of circumstances connected with the Northern department, which will be found materially to influence the course of affairs in that quarter throughout the current year, and ultimately to be fruitful of annoyance to Washington himself. To make these more clear to the reader, it is necessary to revert to events in the preceding year.

The question of command between Schuyler and Gates, when settled as we have shown by Congress, had caused no interruption to the harmony of intercourse between these generals.

Schuyler directed the affairs of the department with energy and activity from his head-quarters at Albany, where they had been fixed by Congress, while Gates,

subordinate to him, commanded the post of Ticonderoga.

The disappointment of an independent command, however, still rankled in the mind of the latter, and was kept alive by the officious suggestions of meddling friends. In the course of the autumn, his hopes in this respect revived. Schuyler was again disgusted with the service. In the discharge of his various and harassing duties, he had been annoyed by sectional jealousies and ill will. His motives and measures had been maligned. The failures in Canada had been attributed to him, and he had repeatedly entreated Congress to order an inquiry into the many charges made against him, "that he might not any longer be insulted."

"I assure you," writes he to Gates, on the 25th of August, "that I am so sincerely tired of abuse, that I will let my enemies arrive at the completion of their wishes by retiring, as soon as I shall have been tried; and attempt to serve my injured country in some other way, where envy and detraction will have no temptation to follow me."

On the 14th of September, he actually offered his resignation of his commission as major-general, and of every other office and appointment; still claiming a court of inquiry on his conduct, and expressing his determination to fulfill the duties of a good citizen, and promote the weal of his native country, but in some other capacity. "I trust," writes he, "that my successor, whoever he

may be, will find that matters are as prosperously arranged in this department as the nature of the service will admit. I shall most readily give him any information and assistance in my power."

He immediately wrote to General Gates, apprising him of his having sent in his resignation. "It is much to be lamented," writes he, "that calumny is so much cherished in this unhappy country, and that so few of the servants of the public escape the malevolence of a set of insidious miscreants. It has driven me to the necessity of resigning."

As the command of the department, should his resignation be accepted, would of course devolve on Gates, he assures him he will render every assistance in his power to any officer whom Gates might appoint to command in Albany.

All his letters to Gates, while they were thus in relation to the department, had been kind and courteous; beginning with, "My dear General," and ending with "adieu" and "every friendly wish." Schuyler was a warm-hearted man, and his expressions were probably sincere.

The hopes of Gates, inspired by this proffered resignation, were doomed to be again overclouded. Schuyler was informed by President Hancock, "that Congress, during the present state of affairs, could not consent to accept of his resignation: but requested that he would continue in the command he held, and be assured that the aspersions thrown out by his enemies against his

character, had no influence upon the minds of the members of that House; and that more effectually to put calumny to silence, they would at an early day appoint a committee to inquire fully into his conduct, which they trusted would establish his reputation in the opinion of all good men."

Schuyler received the resolve of Congress with grim acquiescence, but showed in his reply that he was but half soothed. "At this very critical juncture," writes he, October 16, "I shall waive those remarks which in justice to myself, I must make at a future day. The calumny of my enemies has arisen to its height. Their malice is incapable of heightening the injury. . . . . In the alarming situation of our affairs, I shall continue to act some time longer, but Congress must prepare to put the care of this department into other hands. I shall be able to render my country better services in another line: less exposed to a repetition of the injuries I have sustained."

He had remained at his post, therefore, discharging the various duties of his department with his usual zeal and activity; and Gates, at the end of the campaign, had repaired, as we have shown, to the vicinity of Congress, to attend the fluctuation of events.

Circumstances in the course of the winter had put the worthy Schuyler again on points of punctilio with Congress. Among some letters intercepted by the enemy and retaken by the Americans, was one from Colonel Joseph Trumbull, the commissary-general, insinuating

that General Schuyler had secreted or suppressed a commission sent for his brother, Colonel John Trumbull, as deputy adjutant-general.* The purport of the letter was reported to Schuyler. He spurned at the insinuation. "If it be true that he has asserted such a thing," writes he to the president, "I shall expect from Congress that justice which is due to me."

Three weeks later he inclosed to the president a copy of Trumbull's letter. "I hope," writes he, "Congress will not entertain the least idea that I can tamely submit to such injurious treatment. I expect they will immediately do what is incumbent on them on the occasion. Until Mr. Trumbull and I are upon a footing, I cannot do what the laws of honor and a regard to my own reputation render indispensably necessary. Congress can put us on a par by dismissing one or the other from the service."

Congress failed to comply with the general's request. They added also to his chagrin by dismissing from the service an army physician, in whose appointment he had particularly interested himself.

Schuyler was a proud-spirited man, and, at times, somewhat irascible. In a letter to Congress on the 8th of February, he observed: "As Dr. Stringer had my rec-

* The reader may recollect that it was Commissary-general Trumbull who wrote the letter to Gates calculated to inflame his jealousy against Schuyler, when the question of command had risen between them. (See vol. i. ch. 28.)

ommendation to the office he has sustained, perhaps it was a compliment due to me that I should have been advised of the reason of his dismission."

And again: "I was in hopes some notice would have been taken of the odious suspicion contained in Mr. Commissary Trumbull's intercepted letter. I really feel myself deeply chagrined on the occasion. I am incapable of the meanness he suspects me of, and I confidently expected that Congress would have done me that justice which it was in their power to give, and which I humbly conceive they ought to have done."

This letter gave great umbrage to Congress, but no immediate answer was made to it.

About this time the office of adjutant-general, which had remained vacant ever since the resignation of Colonel Reed, to the great detriment of the service, especially now when a new army was to be formed, was offered to General Gates, who had formerly filled it with ability; and President Hancock informed him, by letter, of the earnest desire of Congress that he should resume it, retaining his present rank and pay.

Gates almost resented the proposal. "Unless the commander-in-chief earnestly makes the same request with your Excellency," replies he, "all my endeavors as adjutant-general would be vain and fruitless. I had, last year, the honor to command in the second post in America; and had the good fortune to prevent the enemy from making their so much wished-for junction with General

Howe. After this, to be expected to dwindle again to the adjutant-general, requires more philosophy on my part, and something more than words on yours." *

He wrote to Washington to the same effect, but declared that, should it be his Excellency's wish, he would resume the office with alacrity.

Washington promptly replied that he had often wished it in secret, though he had never even hinted at it, supposing Gates might have scruples on the subject. "You cannot conceive the pleasure I feel," adds he, "when you tell me that, if it is my desire that you should resume your former office, you will with cheerfulness and alacrity proceed to Morristown." He thanks him for this mark of attention to his wishes; assures him that he looks upon his resumption of the office as the only means of giving form and regularity to the new army; and will be glad to receive a line from him mentioning the time he would leave Philadelphia.

He received no such line. Gates had a higher object in view. A letter from Schuyler to Congress, had informed that body that he should set out for Philadelphia about the 21st of March, and should immediately on his arrival require the promised inquiry into his conduct. Gates, of course, was acquainted with this circumstance. He knew Schuyler had given offense to Congress; he knew that he had been offended on his own part, and had

* Gates' *Papers*. N. Y. H. Lib.

repeatedly talked of resigning. He had active friends in Congress ready to push his interests. On the 12th of March his letter to President Hancock about the proffered adjutancy was read, and ordered to be taken into consideration on the following day.

On the 13th, a committee of five was appointed to confer with him upon the general state of affairs.

On the 15th, the letter of General Schuyler of the 3d of February which had given such offense, was brought before the House, and it was resolved that his suggestion concerning the dismission of Dr. Stringer, was highly derogatory to the honor of Congress, and that it was expected his letters in future would be written in a style suitable to the dignity of the representative body of these free and independent States, and to his own character as their officer. His expressions, too, respecting the intercepted letter, that he had expected Congress would have done him all the justice in their power, were pronounced, "to say the least, ill-advised and highly indecent." *

While Schuyler was thus in partial eclipse, the House proceeded to appoint a general officer for the Northern department, of which he had stated it to be in need.

On the 25th of March, Gates received the following note from President Hancock: "I have it in charge to direct that you repair to Ticonderoga immediately, and take command of the army stationed in that department."

*Journals of Congress.

Gates obeyed with alacrity. Again the vision of an independent command floated before his mind, and he was on his way to Albany, at the time that Schuyler, ignorant of this new arrangement, was journeying to Philadelphia. Gates was accompanied by Brigadier-general Fermois, a French officer, recently commissioned in the continental army. A rumor of his approach preceded him. "What are the terms on which Gates is coming on?" was asked in Albany. "Has Schuyler been superseded, or is he to be so, or has he resigned?" For a time all was rumor and conjecture. A report reached his family that he was to be divested of all titles and rank other than that of Philip Schuyler, Esquire. They heard it with joy, knowing the carking cares and annoyances that had beset him in his command. His military friends deprecated it as a great loss to the service.*

When Gates arrived in Albany, Colonel Varick, Schuyler's secretary, waited on him with a message from Mrs. Schuyler, inviting him to take up his quarters at the general's house, which was in the vicinity. He declined, as the despatch of affairs required him to be continually in town; but took his breakfast with Mrs. Schuyler the next morning. He remained in Albany, unwilling to depart for Ticonderoga until there should be sufficient troops there to support him.

Schuyler arrived in Philadelphia in the second week

* Letter of Colonel Richard Varick. Schuyler's Letter Book.

in April, and found himself superseded in effect by General Gates in the Northern department. He inclosed to the committee of Albany the recent resolutions of Congress, passed before his arrival. "By these," writes he, "you will readily perceive that I shall not return a general. Under what influence it has been brought about, I am not at liberty now to mention. On my return to Albany, I shall give the committee the fullest information."*

Taking his seat in Congress as a delegate from New York, he demanded the promised investigation of his conduct during the time he had held a command in the army. It was his intention, when the scrutiny had taken place, to resign his commission, and retire from the service. On the 18th, a committee of inquiry was appointed, as at his request, composed of a member from each State.

In the meantime, as second major-general of the United States (Lee being the first), he held active command at Philadelphia, forming a camp on the western side of the Delaware, completing the works on Fort Island, throwing up works on Red Bank, and accelerating the despatch of troops and provisions to the commander-in-chief. During his sojourn at Philadelphia, also, he contributed essentially to reorganize the commissary department; digesting rules for its regulation, which were mainly adopted by Congress.

* Schuyler's Letter Book.

CHAPTER V.

FOREIGN OFFICERS CANDIDATES FOR SITUATIONS IN THE ARMY.—DIFFICULTIES IN ADJUSTING QUESTIONS OF RANK.—DUCOUDRAY.—CONWAY.—KOSCIUSZKO.—WASHINGTON'S GUARDS.—ARNOLD OMITTED IN THE ARMY PROMOTIONS—WASHINGTON TAKES HIS PART.—BRITISH EXPEDITION AGAINST DANBURY.—DESTRUCTION OF AMERICAN STORES.—CONNECTICUT YEOMANRY IN ARMS.—SKIRMISH AT RIDGEFIELD.—DEATH OF GENERAL WOOSTER.—GALLANT SERVICES OF ARNOLD.—REWARDED BY CONGRESS.—EXPLOIT OF COLONEL MEIGS AT SAG HARBOR.

THE fame of the American struggle for independence was bringing foreign officers as candidates for admission into the patriot army, and causing great embarrassment to the commander-in-chief. "They seldom," writes Washington, "bring more than a commission and a passport; which we know may belong to a bad as well as a good officer. Their ignorance of our language, and their inability to recruit men, are insurmountable obstacles to their being engrafted in our continental battalions; for our officers, who have raised their men, and have served through the war upon pay that has not hitherto borne their expenses, would be disgusted if foreigners were put over their heads; and I assure you, few or none of these gentlemen look

lower than field officers' commissions. . . . . Some general mode of disposing of them must be adopted, for it is ungenerous to keep them in suspense, and a great charge to themselves; but I am at a loss to know how to point out this mode."

Congress determined that no foreign officers should receive commissions who were not well acquainted with the English language, and did not bring strong testimonials of their abilities. Still there was embarrassment. Some came with brevet commissions from the French government, and had been assured by Mr. Deane, American commissioner at Paris, that they would have the same rank in the American army. This would put them above American officers of merit and hard service, whose commissions were of more recent date. One Monsieur Ducoudray, on the strength of an agreement with Mr. Deane, expected to have the rank of major-general, and to be put at the head of the artillery. Washington deprecated the idea of intrusting a department on which the very salvation of the army might depend, to a foreigner, who had no other tie to bind him to the interests of the country than honor; besides, he observed, it would endanger the loss to the service of General Knox, "a man of great military reading, sound judgment, and clear perceptions. He has conducted the affairs of that department with honor to himself and advantage to the public, and will resign if any one is put over him."

In fact, the report that Ducoudray was to be a major-

general, with a commission dated in the preceding year, caused a commotion among the American officers of that rank, but whose commissions were of later date. Congress eventually determined not to ratify the contract entered into between Mr. Deane and Monsieur Ducoudray, and resolved that the commissions of foreign officers received into the service, should bear date on the day of their being filled up by Washington.

Among the foreign candidates for appointments was one Colonel Conway, a native of Ireland, but who, according to his own account, had been thirty years in the service of France, and claimed to be a chevalier of the order of St. Louis, of which he wore the decoration. Mr. Deane had recommended him to Washington as an officer of merit, and had written to Congress that he considered him well qualified for the office of adjutant or brigadier-general, and that he had given him reason to hope for one or the other of these appointments. Colonel Conway pushed for that of brigadier-general. It had been conferred some time before by Congress on two French officers, De Fermois and Deborre, who, he had observed, had been inferior to him in the French service, and it would be mortifying now to hold rank below them.

"I cannot pretend," writes Washington to the president, "to speak of Colonel Conway's merits or abilities of my own knowledge. He appears to be a man of candor, and, if he has been in service as long as he says, I should suppose him infinitely better qualified to serve us than

many who have been promoted, as he speaks our language."

Conway accordingly received the rank of brigadier-general, of which he subsequently proved himself unworthy. He was boastful and presumptuous, and became noted for his intrigues, and for a despicable cabal against the commander-in-chief, which went by his name, and of which we shall have to speak hereafter.

A candidate of a different stamp had presented himself in the preceding year, the gallant, generous-spirited, Thaddeus Kosciuszko. He was a Pole, of an ancient and noble family of Lithuania, and had been educated for the profession of arms at the military school at Warsaw, and subsequently in France. Disappointed in a love affair with a beautiful lady of rank with whom he had attempted to elope, he had emigrated to this country, and came provided with a letter of introduction from Dr. Franklin to Washington.

"What do you seek here?" inquired the commander-in-chief.

"To fight for American independence."

"What can you do?"

"Try me."

Washington was pleased with the curt, yet comprehensive reply, and with his chivalrous air and spirit, and at once received him into his family as an aide-de-camp.*

* *Foreign Quarterly Review*, vol. xv. p. 114.

Congress shortly afterwards appointed him an engineer, with the rank of colonel. He proved a valuable officer throughout the Revolution, and won an honorable and lasting name in our country.

Among the regiments which had been formed in the spring, one had been named by its officers "The Congress' Own," and another "General Washington's Life Guards." A resolve of Congress promptly appeared, pronouncing those appellations improper, and ordering that they should be discontinued. Washington's own modesty had already administered a corrective. In a letter to the President of Congress, he declared that the regiments had been so named without his consent or privity. "As soon as I heard of it," writes he, "I wrote to several of the officers in terms of severe reprehension, and expressly charged them to suppress the distinction, adding that all the battalions were on the same footing, and all under the general name of Continental." No man was less desirous for all individual distinctions of the kind.

Somewhat later he really formed a company for his guard. Colonel Alexander Spotswood had the selection of the men, four from each regiment; and was charged to be extremely cautious, "because," writes Washington, "it is more than probable that, in the course of the campaign, my baggage, papers, and other matters of great public import, may be committed to the sole care of these men." That the company might look well, and be

nearly of a size, none were to be over five feet ten, nor under five feet nine inches in stature, and to be sober, young, active, and well-made, of good character, and proud of appearing clean and soldier-like. As there would be a greater chance for fidelity among such as had family connections in the country, Spotswood was charged to send none but natives, and, if possible, men of some property. "I must insist," concludes Washington, "that, in making this choice, you give no intimation of my preference of natives, as I do not want to create any invidious distinction between them and the officers." *

Questions of rank among his generals, were, as we have repeatedly shown, perpetual sources of perplexity to Washington, and too often caused by what the sarcastic Lee termed "the stumblings of Congress;" such was the case at present. In recent army promotions, Congress had advanced Stirling, Mifflin, St. Clair, Stephen, and Lincoln, to the rank of major-general, while Arnold, their senior in service, and distinguished by so many brilliant exploits, was passed over and left to remain a brigadier.

Washington was surprised at not seeing his name on the list, but supposing it might have been omitted through mistake, he wrote to Arnold, who was at Providence in Rhode Island, advising him not to take any

* Sparks. *Writings of Washington*, iv. 407.

hasty step in consequence, but to allow time for reflection, promising his own endeavors to remedy any error that might have been made. He wrote also to Henry Lee in Congress, inquiring whether the omission was owing to accident or design. "Surely," said he, "a more active, a more spirited, and sensible officer, fills no department of your army. Not seeing him, then, in the list of major-generals, and no mention made of him, has given me uneasiness; as it is not presumed, being the oldest brigadier, that he will continue in service under such a slight."

Arnold was, in truth, deeply wounded by the omission. "I am greatly obliged to your Excellency," writes he to Washington, "for interesting yourself so much in respect to my appointment, which I have had no advice of, and know not by what means it was announced in the papers. Congress undoubtedly have a right of promoting those whom, from their abilities, and their long and arduous services, they esteem most deserving. Their promoting junior officers to the rank of major-generals, I view as a very civil way of requesting my resignation, as unqualified for the office I hold. My commission was conferred unsolicited, and received with pleasure only as a means of serving my country. With equal pleasure I resign it, when I can no longer serve my country with honor. The person who, void of the nice feelings of honor, will tamely condescend to give up his right, and retain a commission at the expense of his reputation, I

hold as a disgrace to the army, and unworthy of the glorious cause in which we are engaged. . . . . In justice, therefore, to my own character, and for the satisfaction of my friends, I must request a court of inquiry into my conduct; and though I sensibly feel the ingratitude of my countrymen, yet every personal injury shall be buried in my zeal for the safety and happiness of my country, in whose cause I have repeatedly fought and bled, and am ready at all times to risk my life."

He subsequently intimated that he should avoid any hasty step, and should remain at his post until he could leave it without any damage to the public interest.

The principle upon which Congress had proceeded in their recent promotions was explained to Washington. The number of general officers promoted from each State was proportioned to the number of men furnished by it. Connecticut (Arnold's State) had already two major-generals, which was its full share. "I confess," writes Washington to Arnold, "this is a strange mode of reasoning; but it may serve to show you that the promotion, which was due to your seniority, was not overlooked for want of merit in you."

"The point," observes he, "is of so delicate a nature, that I will not even undertake to advise. Your own feelings must be your guide. As no particular charge is alleged against you, I do not see upon what grounds you can demand a court of inquiry. Your determination not

to quit your present command, while any danger to the public might ensue from your leaving it, deserves my thanks, and justly entitles you to the thanks of the country."

An opportunity occurred before long, for Arnold again to signalize himself.

The amount of stores destroyed at Peekskill had fallen far short of General Howe's expectations. Something more must be done to cripple the Americans before the opening of the campaign. Accordingly, another expedition was set on foot against a still larger deposit at Danbury, within the borders of Connecticut, and between twenty and thirty miles from Peekskill.

Ex-governor Tryon, recently commissioned major-general of provincials, conducted it, accompanied by Brigadier-general Agnew and Sir William Erskine. He had a mongrel force two thousand strong; American, Irish, and British refugees from various parts of the continent; and made his appearance on the Sound in the latter part of April, with a fleet of twenty-six sail, greatly to the disquiet of every assailable place along the coast. On the 25th, towards evening, he landed his troops on the beach at the foot of Canepo Hill, near the mouth of the Saugatuck River. The yeomanry of the neighborhood had assembled to resist them, but a few cannon-shot made them give way, and the troops set off for Danbury, about twenty-three miles distant; galled at first by a scattering fire from behind a stone fence. They were in a pa-

triotic neighborhood. General Silliman, of the Connecticut militia, who resided at Fairfield, a few miles distant, sent out expresses to rouse the country. It so happened that General Arnold was at New Haven, between twenty and thirty miles off, on his way to Philadelphia for the purpose of settling his accounts. At the alarm of a British inroad, he forgot his injuries and irritation, mounted his horse, and, accompanied by General Wooster, hastened to join General Silliman. As they spurred forward, every farm-house sent out its warrior, until upwards of a hundred were pressing on with them, full of the fighting spirit. Lieutenant Oswald, Arnold's secretary in the Canada campaign, who had led the forlorn hope in the attempt upon Quebec, was at this time at New Haven, enlisting men for Lamb's regiment of artillery. He, too, heard the note of alarm, and mustering his recruits, marched off with three field-pieces for the scene of action."*

In the meanwhile the British, marching all night with short haltings, reached Danbury about two o'clock in the afternoon of the 26th. There were but fifty Continental soldiers and one hundred militia in the place. These retreated, as did most of the inhabitants, excepting such as remained to take care of the sick and aged. Four men, intoxicated, as it was said, fired upon the troops from the windows of a large house. The soldiers rushed

* *Life of Lamb*, p. 157.

in, drove them into the cellar, set fire to the house, and left them to perish in the flames.

There was a great quantity of stores of all kinds in the village, and no vehicles to convey them to the ships. The work of destruction commenced. The soldiers made free with the liquors found in abundance; and throughout the greater part of the night there was revel, drunkenness, blasphemy, and devastation. Tryon, full of anxiety, and aware that the country was rising, ordered a retreat before daylight, setting fire to the magazines to complete the destruction of the stores. The flames spread to the other edifices, and almost the whole village was soon in a blaze. The extreme darkness of a rainy night made the conflagration more balefully apparent throughout the country.

While these scenes had been transacted at Danbury, the Connecticut yeomanry had been gathering. Fairfield and the adjacent counties had poured out their minute men. General Silliman had advanced at the head of five hundred. General Wooster and Arnold joined him with their chance followers, as did a few more militia. A heavy rain retarded their march; it was near midnight when they reached Bethel, within four miles of Danbury. Here they halted, to take a little repose and put their arms in order, rendered almost unserviceable by the rain. They were now about six hundred strong. Wooster took the command, as first major-general of the militia of the State. Though in the sixty-eighth year of his age, he

was full of ardor, with almost youthful fire and daring. A plan was concerted to punish the enemy on their retreat; and the lurid light of Danbury in flames redoubled the provocation. At dawn of day, Wooster detached Arnold with four hundred men, to push across the country and take post at Ridgefield, by which the British must pass; while he with two hundred remained, to hang on and harass them in flank and rear.

The British began their retreat early in the morning, conducting it in regular style, with flanking parties, and a rear-guard well furnished with artillery. As soon as they had passed his position, Wooster attacked the rear-guard with great spirit and effect; there was sharp skirmishing until within two miles of Ridgefield, when, as the veteran was cheering on his men, who began to waver, a musket-ball brought him down from his horse, and finished his gallant career. On his fall his men retreated in disorder.

The delay which his attack had occasioned to the enemy, had given Arnold time to throw up a kind of breastwork or barricade across the road at the north end of Ridgefield, protected by a house on the right, and a high rocky bank on the left, where he took his stand with his little force now increased to about five hundred men. About eleven o'clock the enemy advanced in column, with artillery and flanking parties. They were kept at bay for a time, and received several volleys from the barricade, until it was outflanked and carried. Ar-

nold ordered a retreat, and was bringing off the rear-guard, when his horse was shot under him, and came down upon his knees. Arnold remained seated in the saddle, with one foot entangled in the stirrups. A tory soldier seeing his plight, rushed towards him with fixed bayonet. He had just time to draw a pistol from the holster. "You're my prisoner," cried the tory. "Not yet," exclaimed Arnold, and shot him dead. Then extricating his foot from the stirrup, he threw himself into the thickets of a neighboring swamp, and escaped, unharmed by the bullets that whistled after him, and joined his retreating troops.

General Tryon intrenched for the night in Ridgefield, his troops having suffered greatly in their harassed retreat. The next morning, after having set fire to four houses, he continued his march for the ships.

Colonel Huntingdon, of the Continental army, with the troops which had been stationed at Danbury, the scattered forces of Wooster which had joined him, and a number of militia, hung on the rear of the enemy as soon as they were in motion. Arnold was again in the field, with his rallied forces strengthened by Lieutenant-colonel Oswald with two companies of Lamb's artillery regiment and three field-pieces. With these he again posted himself on the enemy's route.

Difficulties and annoyances had multiplied upon the latter at every step. When they came in sight of the position where Arnold was waiting for them, they changed

their route, wheeled to the left, and made for a ford of Saugatuck River. Arnold hastened to cross the bridge and take them in flank, but they were too quick for him. Colonel Lamb had now reached the scene of action, as had about two hundred volunteers. Leaving to Oswald the charge of the artillery, he put himself at the head of the volunteers, and led them up to Arnold's assistance.

The enemy, finding themselves hard pressed, pushed for Canepo Hill. They reached it in the evening, without a round of ammunition in their cartridge-boxes. As they were now within cannon-shot of their ships, the Americans ceased the pursuit. The British formed upon high ground, brought their artillery to the front, and sent off to the ships for reinforcements. Sir William Erskine landed a large body of marines and sailors, who drove the Americans back for some distance, and covered the embarkation of the troops. Colonel Lamb, while leading on his men gallantly to capture the British field-pieces, was wounded by a grape-shot, and Arnold, while cheering on the militia, had another horse shot under him. In the meantime, the harassed marauders effected their embarkation, and the fleet got under way.

In this inroad the enemy destroyed a considerable amount of military stores, and seventeen hundred tents prepared for the use of Washington's army in the ensuing campaign. The loss of General Wooster was deeply deplored. He survived the action long enough to be

consoled in his dying moments at Danbury, by the presence of his wife and son, who hastened thither from New Haven. As to Arnold, his gallantry in this affair gained him fresh laurels, and Congress, to remedy their late error, promoted him to the rank of major-general. Still this promotion did not restore him to his proper position. He was at the bottom of the list of major-generals, with four officers above him, his juniors in service. Washington felt this injustice on the part of Congress, and wrote about it to the president. "He has certainly discovered," said he, "in every instance where he has had an opportunity, much bravery, activity, and enterprise. But what will be done about his rank? He will not act, most probably, under those he commanded but a few weeks ago."

As an additional balm to Arnold's wounded pride, Congress a few days afterwards voted that a horse, properly caparisoned, should be presented to him in their name, as a token of their approbation of his gallant conduct in the late action, "in which he had one horse shot under him and another wounded." But after all he remained at the bottom of the list, and the wound still rankled in his bosom.

The destructive expeditions against the American depots of military stores, were retaliated in kind by Colonel Meigs, a spirited officer, who had accompanied Arnold in his expedition through the wilderness against Quebec, and had caught something of his love for hardy exploit.

Having received intelligence that the British commissaries had collected a great amount of grain, forage, and other supplies at Sag Harbor, a small port in the deep bay which forks the east end of Long Island, he crossed the Sound on the 23d of May from Guilford in Connecticut, with about one hundred and seventy men in whale-boats convoyed by two armed sloops: landed on the island near Southold; carried the boats a distance of fifteen miles across the north fork of the bay, launched them into the latter, crossed it, landed within four miles of Sag Harbor, and before daybreak carried the place, which was guarded by a company of foot. A furious fire of round and grape shot was opened upon the Americans from an armed schooner, anchored about one hundred and fifty yards from shore; and stout defense was made by the crews of a dozen brigs and sloops lying at the wharf to take in freight; but Meigs succeeded in burning these vessels, destroying everything on shore, and carrying off ninety prisoners; among whom were the officer of the company of foot, the commissaries, and the captains of most of the small vessels. With these he and his party recrossed the bay, transported their boats again across the fork of land, launched them on the Sound, and got safe back to Guilford, having achieved all this, and traversed about ninety miles of land and water, in twenty-five hours. Washington was so highly pleased with the spirit and success of this enterprise, that he publicly returned thanks to Colonel Meigs and the

officers and men engaged in it. It could not fail, he said, greatly to distress the enemy in the important and essential article of forage. But it was the moral effect of the enterprise which gave it the most value. It is difficult, at the present day, sufficiently to appreciate the importance of partisan exploits of the kind, in the critical stage of the war of which we are treating. They cheered the spirit of the people, depressed by overshadowing dangers and severe privations, and kept alive the military spark that was to kindle into the future flame.

CHAPTER VI.

SCHUYLER ON THE POINT OF RESIGNING.—COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY REPORT IN HIS FAVOR.—HIS MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS PROVES SATISFACTORY.—DISCUSSIONS REGARDING THE NORTHERN DÉPARTMENT.—GATES MISTAKEN AS TO HIS POSITION.—HE PROMPTS HIS FRIENDS IN CONGRESS.—HIS PETULANT LETTER TO WASHINGTON.—DIGNIFIED REPLY OF THE LATTER.—POSITION OF GATES DEFINED.—SCHUYLER REINSTATED IN COMMAND OF THE DEPARTMENT.—GATES APPEARS ON THE FLOOR OF CONGRESS.—HIS PROCEEDINGS THERE.

THE time was at hand for the committee of inquiry on General Schuyler's conduct to make their report to Congress, and he awaited it with impatience. "I propose in a day or two to resign my commission," writes he to Washington on the 3d of May. "As soon as I have done it, I shall transmit to your Excellency my reasons for such a step."

Washington was grieved at receiving this intimation. He had ever found Schuyler a faithful coadjutor. He knew his peculiar fitness for the Northern department from his knowledge of the country and its people, his influence among its most important citizens, his experience in treating with the Indians, his fiery energy, his fertility in expedients, and his "sound military sense."

But he knew also his sensitive nature, and the peculiar annoyances with which he had had to contend. On a former occasion he had prevented him from resigning, by an appeal to his patriotism; he no longer felt justified in interfering. "I am sorry," writes he, "that circumstances are such as to dispose you to a resignation; but you are the best judge of the line of conduct most reconcilable to your duty, both in a public and personal view; and your own feelings must determine you in a matter of so delicate and interesting a nature."*

Affairs, however, were taking a more favorable turn. The committee of inquiry made a report which placed the character of Schuyler higher than ever as an able and active commander, and a zealous and disinterested patriot.

He made a memorial to Congress explaining away or apologizing for the expressions in his letter of the 4th of February, which had given offense to the House. His memorial was satisfactory; and he was officially informed that Congress now "entertained the same favorable sentiments concerning him, that they had entertained before that letter was received."

There were warm discussions in the House on the subject of the Northern department. Several of the most important of the New York delegates observed that General Gates misapprehended his position. He considered

* Schuyler's Letter Book.

himself as holding the same command as that formerly held by General Schuyler. Such was not the intention of Congress in sending him to take command of the army at Ticonderoga. There had been a question between sending him to *that post*, or giving him the adjutancy general, and it had been decided for the former.

It would be nonsense, they observed, to give him command of the Northern department, and confine him to Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, where he could not have an extensive idea of the defense of the frontier of the Eastern States; but only of one spot, to which the enemy were not obliged to confine their operations, and, as it were, to knock their heads against a single rock. The affairs of the northeast, it was added, and of the State of New York in particular, were in a critical condition. Much disaffection prevailed, and great clashing of interests. There was but one man capable of keeping all united against the common enemy, and he stood on the books as commander-in-chief of the Middle, or, as it was sometimes called, the Northern department. His presence was absolutely necessary in his home quarters for their immediate succor, but if he returned, he would be a general, without an army or a military chest; and why was he thus disgraced?

The friends of Gates, on the other hand, who were chiefly delegates from New England, pronounced it an absurdity, that an officer holding such an important post as Ticonderoga, should be under the absolute orders of

another one hundred miles distant, engaged in treaties with Indians, and busied in the duties of a provedore. The establishment of commands in departments was entirely wrong; there should be a commander-in-chief, and commanders of the different armies.

We gather these scanty particulars from a letter addressed to Gates by Mr. Lovell. The latter expresses himself with a proper spirit. "I wish," writes he, "some course could be taken which would suit you both. It is plain all the Northern army cannot be intended for the single garrison of Ticonderoga. Who then has the distribution of the members? This must depend on one opinion, or there can be no decision in the defense of the Northern frontiers. It is an unhappy circumstance that such is the altercation at the opening of the campaign."

This letter produced an anxious reply: "Why," writes Gates, "when the argument in support of General Schuyler's command was imposed upon Congress, did not you or somebody say, 'the second post upon this continent next campaign will be at or near Peekskill. There General Schuyler ought to go and command; that will be the curb in the mouth of the New York tories, and the enemy's army. He will then be near the convention and in the centre of the colony, have a military chest, and all the insignia of office.' This command in honor could not be refused, without owning there is something more alluring than command to General Schuyler, by fixing him

at Albany. By urging this matter home you would have proved the man. He would have resigned all command, have accepted the government of New York, and been fixed to a station where he must do good, and which could not interfere with, or prevent any arrangement Congress have made, or may hereafter make. Unhappy State! That has but one man in it who can fix the wavering minds of its inhabitants to the side of freedom! How could you sit patiently, and, uncontradicted, suffer such impertinence to be crammed down your throats?"

"Why is it nonsense," pursues Gates, "to station the commanding general in the Northern department at Ticonderoga? Was it not the uniform practice of the royal army all last war? Nothing is more certain than that the enemy must first possess that single rock before they can penetrate the country. . . . . It is foolish in the extreme, to believe the enemy this year can form any attack from the northward but by Ticonderoga. Where, then, ought the commanding general to be posted? Certainly at Ticonderoga. If General Schuyler is solely to possess all the power, all the intelligence, and that particular favorite, the military chest, and constantly reside at Albany, I cannot, with any peace of mind, serve at Ticonderoga." *

This letter was despatched by private hand to Philadelphia.

* Letter to Jas. Lovell of Massachusetts. Gates's *Papers*, N. Y. Hist Lib.

While Gates was in this mood, his aide-de-camp, Major Troup, reported an unsuccessful application to the commander-in-chief for tents. In the petulance of the moment, Gates addressed the following letter to Washington: "Major Troup, upon being disappointed in procuring tents at Fishkill, acquaints me that he went to head-quarters to implore your Excellency's aid in that particular for the Northern army. He says your Excellency told him you should want every tent upon the continent for the armies to the southward, and that you did not see any occasion the Northern army could have for tents, for, being a fixed post, they might hut. Refusing this army what you have not in your power to bestow, is one thing," adds Gates, "but saying that this army has not the same necessities as the Southern armies, is another. I can assure your Excellency the service of the northward requires tents as much as any service I ever saw." *

However indignant Washington may have felt at the disrespectful tone of this letter, and the unwarrantable imputation of sectional partiality contained in it, he contented himself with a grave and measured rebuke. "Can you suppose," writes he, "if there had been an ample supply of tents for the whole army, that I should have hesitated one moment in complying with your demand? I told Major Troup that on account of our loss at Dan-

* Gates's *Papers.*

bury there would be a scarcity of tents; that our army would be a moving one, and that consequently nothing but tents would serve our turn; and that, therefore, as there would be the greatest probability of your being stationary, you should endeavor to cover your troops with barracks and huts. Certainly this was not a refusal of tents, but a request that you should, in our contracted situation, make every shift to do without them, or at least with as few as possible.

"The Northern army is, and ever has been, as much the object of my care and attention as the one immediately under my command. . . . . I will make particular inquiry of the quartermaster-general, concerning his prospect and expectation as to the article of tents and if, as I said before, there appears a sufficiency for the whole army, you shall most willingly have your share. But, if there is not, surely that army whose movement is uncertain, must give up its claims for the present to that which must inevitably take the field the moment the weather will admit, and must continue in it the whole campaign."*

Notwithstanding this reply, Gates persisted in imputing sectional partiality to the commander-in-chief, and sought to impart the same idea to Congress. "Either I am exceedingly dull or unreasonably jealous," writes he to his correspondent Mr. Lovell, "if I do not

* *Washington's Writings*, Sparks, iv. 427.

discover by the style and tenor of the letters from Morristown how little I have to expect from thence. Generals are so far like parsons, they are all for christening their own child first; but, let an impartial moderating power decide between us and do not suffer Southern prejudices to weigh heavier in the balance than the Northern."*

A letter from Mr. Lovell, dated the 23d of May, put an end to the suspense of the general with respect to his position. "Misconceptions of past resolves and consequent jealousies," writes he, "have produced a definition of the Northern department, and General Schuyler is ordered to take command of it. The resolve, also, which was thought to *fix* head-quarters at Albany, is repealed."

Such a resolve had actually been passed on the 22d, and Albany, Ticonderoga, Fort Stanwix, and their dependencies, were thenceforward to be considered as forming the Northern department. The envoy of Gates, bearing the letter in which he had carved out a command for Schuyler at Peekskill, arrived at Philadelphia too late. The general was already provided for.

Schuyler was received with open arms at Albany, on the 3d of June. "I had the satisfaction," writes he, "to experience the finest feelings which my country expressed on my arrival and reappointment. The day after my

* Gates's *Papers*, N. Y. Hist. Lib.

arrival, the whole county committee did me the honor in form to congratulate me."

Gates was still in Albany, delaying to proceed with General Fermois to Ticonderoga until the garrison should be sufficiently strengthened. Although the resolve of Congress did but define his position, which had been misunderstood, he persisted in considering himself degraded; declined serving under General Schuyler, who would have given him the post at Ticonderoga in his absence; and obtaining permission to leave the department, set out on the 9th for Philadelphia, to demand redress of Congress.

General St. Clair was sent to take command of the troops at Ticonderoga, accompanied by General Fermois. As the whole force in the Northern department would not be sufficient to command the extensive works there on both sides of the lake, St. Clair was instructed to bestow his first attention in fortifying Mount Independence, on the east side, Schuyler considering it much the most defensible, and that it might be made capable of sustaining a long and vigorous siege.

"I am fully convinced," writes he, "that between two and three thousand men can effectually maintain Mount Independence and secure the pass."

It would be imprudent, he thought, to station the greater part of the forces at Fort Ticonderoga; as, should the enemy be able to invest it, and cut off the communication with the country on the east side, it

might experience a disaster similar to that at Fort Washington.

The orders of Schuyler to officers commanding posts in the department, are characterized by his Dutch attention to cleanliness as to the quarters of the soldiers, their bedding, clothing, and equipments.

All officers mounting guard, were to have their hair dressed and powdered. The adjutants of the several corps were to be particularly careful that none of the non-commissioned officers and soldiers mount guard without having their hair dressed and powdered, their persons perfectly clean, and their arms and accoutrements in the most complete order.

While Schuyler was thus providing for the security of Ticonderoga, and enforcing cleanliness in his department, Gates was wending his way to Philadelphia, his bosom swelling with imaginary wrongs. He arrived there on the 18th. The next day at noon, Mr. Roger Sherman, an Eastern delegate, informed Congress that General Gates was waiting at the door, and wished admittance.

"For what purpose?" it was asked.

"To communicate intelligence of importance," replied Mr. Sherman.

Gates was accordingly ushered in, took his seat in an elbow chair, and proceeded to give some news concerning the Indians; their friendly dispositions, their delight at seeing French officers in the American service, and other matters of the kind; then, drawing forth some pa-

pers from his pocket, he opened upon the real object of his visit; stating from his notes, in a flurried and disjointed manner, the easy and happy life he had left to take up arms for the liberties of America; and how strenuously he had exerted himself in its defense; how that some time in March he had been appointed to a command in the Northern department; but that a few days since, without having given any cause of offense, without accusation, without trial, without hearing, without notice, he had received a resolution by which he was, in a most disgraceful manner, superseded in his command. Here his irritated feelings got the better of his judgment, and he indulged in angry reproaches of Congress, and recitals of a conversation which had taken place between him and Mr. Duane, a member of the House, whom he considered his enemy. Here Mr. Duane rose, and addressing himself to the president, hoped the general would observe order, and cease any personal observations, as he could not, in Congress, enter into any controversy with him upon the subject of former conversations.

Other of the members took fire; the conduct of the general was pronounced disrespectful to the House, and unworthy of himself, and it was moved and seconded that he be requested to withdraw. Some of the Eastern delegates opposed the motion, and endeavored to palliate his conduct. A wordy clamor ensued, during which the general stood, his papers in his hand, endeavoring

several times to be heard, but the clamor increasing, he withdrew with the utmost indignation. It was then determined that he should not again be admitted on the floor; but should be informed that Congress were ready and willing to hear, by way of memorial, any grievances of which he might have to complain.*

* Letter of the Hon. Wm. Duer. Schuyler's *Papers.*

CHAPTER VII.

THE HIGHLAND PASSES OF THE HUDSON. — GEORGE CLINTON IN COMMAND OF THE FORTS. — HIS MEASURES FOR DEFENSE. — GENERALS GREENE AND KNOX EXAMINE THE STATE OF THE FORTS. — THEIR REPORT. — THE GENERAL COMMAND OF THE HUDSON OFFERED TO ARNOLD. — DECLINED BY HIM. — GIVEN TO PUTNAM. — APPOINTMENT OF DR. CRAIK IN THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT. — EXPEDITION PLANNED AGAINST FORT INDEPENDENCE. — BUT RELINQUISHED. — WASHINGTON SHIFTS HIS CAMP TO MIDDLEBROOK. — STATE OF HIS ARMY. — GENERAL HOWE CROSSES INTO THE JERSEYS. — POSITION OF THE TWO ARMIES AT MIDDLEBROOK AND BEHIND THE RARITAN. — CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND COLONEL REED.

THE Highland passes of the Hudson, always objects of anxious thought to Washington, were especially so at this juncture. General McDougall still commanded at Peekskill, and General George Clinton, who resided at New Windsor, had command of the Highland forts. The latter, at the earnest request of the New York Convention, had received from Congress the command of brigadier-general in the Continental army. "My precarious state of health and want of military knowledge," writes he, "would have rather induced me to have led a more retired life than that of the army, had I been consulted on the occasion; but as, early in the present contest, I laid it down as a maxim

not to refuse my best, though poor services, to my country in any way they should think proper to employ me, I cannot refuse the honor done me in the present appointment." *

He was perfectly sincere in what he said. George Clinton was one of the soldiers of the Revolution who served from a sense of duty, not from military inclination or a thirst for glory. A long career of public service in various capacities illustrated his modest worth and devoted patriotism.

When the "unhappy affair of Peekskill" had alarmed the Convention of New York for the safety of the forts on the Highlands, Clinton, authorized by that body, had ordered out part of the militia of Orange, Dutchess, and Westchester counties, without waiting for Washington's approbation of the measure. He had strengthened, also, with anchors and cables, the chain drawn across the river at Fort Montgomery. "Had the Convention suffered me to have paid my whole attention to this business," writes he to Washington (18th April), "it would have been nearly completed by this time."

A few days later came word that several transports were anchored at Dobb's Ferry in the Tappan Sea. It might be intended to divert attention from a movement towards the Delaware; or to make incursions into the country back of Morristown, seize on the passes through

* Clinton to Washington.

the mountains, and cut off the communication between the army and the Hudson. To frustrate such a design, Washington ordered Clinton to post as good a number of troops from his garrison as he could spare, on the mountains west of the river.

In the month of May, he writes to General McDougall: "The imperfect state of the fortifications of Fort Montgomery gives me great uneasiness, because I think, from a concurrence of circumstances, that it begins to look as if the enemy intended to turn their view towards the North River instead of the Delaware. I therefore desire that General George Clinton and yourself will fall upon every measure to put the fortifications in such a state that they may at least resist a sudden attack, and keep the enemy employed till reinforcements may arrive. If the North River is their object, they cannot accomplish it unless they withdraw their forces from the Jerseys, and that they cannot do unknown to us."

On the 12th of May, General Greene received instructions from Washington to proceed to the Highlands, and examine the state and condition of the forts, especially Fort Montgomery: the probability of an attack by water, the practicability of an approach by land; where and how this could be effected, and the eminences whence the forts could be annoyed. This done, and the opinions of the general officers present having been consulted, he was to give such orders and make such disposition of the troops as might appear necessary for the

greater security of the passes by land and water. When reconnoitering the Highlands in the preceding year, Washington had remarked a wild and rugged pass on the western side of the Hudson round Bull Hill, a rocky, forest-clad mountain, forming an advance rampart at the entrance to Peekskill Bay. "This pass," he observed, "should also be attended to, *lest the enemy by a coup de main should possess themselves of it, before a sufficient force could be assembled to oppose them.*" Subsequent events will illustrate, though unfortunately, the sagacity and foresight of this particular instruction.

General Knox was associated with General Greene in this visit of inspection. They examined the river and the passes of the Highlands in company with Generals McDougall, George Clinton, and Anthony Wayne. The latter, recently promoted to the rank of brigadier, had just returned from Ticonderoga. The five generals made a joint report to Washington, in which they recommended the completion of the obstructions in the river already commenced. These consisted of a boom, or heavy iron chain, across the river from Fort Montgomery to Anthony's Nose, with cables stretched in front to break the force of any ship under way, before she could strike it. The boom was to be protected by the guns of two ships and two row galleys stationed just above it, and by batteries on shore. This, it was deemed, would be sufficient to prevent the enemy's ships from ascending the river. If these obstructions could be rendered effec-

tive, they did not think the enemy would attempt to operate by land, "the passes through the Highlands being so exceedingly difficult."

The general command of the Hudson, from the number of troops to be assembled there, and the variety of points to be guarded, was one of the most important in the service, and required an officer of consummate energy, activity, and judgment. It was a major-general's command, and as such was offered by Washington to Arnold; intending thus publicly to manifest his opinion of his deserts, and hoping, by giving him so important a post, to appease his irritated feelings.

Arnold, however, declined to accept it. In an interview with Washington at Morristown, he alleged his anxiety to proceed to Philadelphia and settle his public accounts, which were of considerable amount; especially as reports had been circulated injurious to his character as a man of integrity. He intended, therefore, to wait on Congress, and request a committee of inquiry into his conduct. Besides, he did not consider the promotion conferred on him by Congress sufficient to obviate their previous neglect, as it did not give him the rank he had a claim to, from seniority in the line of brigadiers. In their last resolve respecting him, they had acknowledged him competent to the station of major-general, and, therefore, had done away every objection implied by their former omission. With these considerations he proceeded to Philadelphia, bearing a letter from Wash-

ington to the President of Congress, countenancing his complaints, and testifying to the excellence of his military character. We may here add, that the accusations against him were pronounced false and slanderous by the Board of War; that the report of the board was confirmed by Congress, but that Arnold was still left aggrieved and unredressed in point of rank.

The important command of the Hudson being declined by Arnold, was now given to Putnam, who repaired forthwith to Peekskill. General McDougall was requested by Washington to aid the veteran in gaining a knowledge of the post. "You are well acquainted," writes he, "with the old gentleman's temper; he is active, disinterested, and open to conviction."

Putnam set about promptly to carry into effect the measures of security which Greene and Knox had recommended; especially the boom and chain at Fort Montgomery, about which General George Clinton had busied himself. Putnam had a peculiar fancy for river obstructions of the kind. A large part of the New York and New England troops were stationed at this post, not merely to guard the Hudson, but to render aid either to the Eastern or Middle States in case of exigency.

About this time, Washington had the satisfaction of drawing near to him his old friend and travelling companion, Dr. James Craik, the same who had served with him in Braddock's campaign, and had voyaged with him down the Ohio; for whom he now procured the appoint-

ment of assistant director-general of the hospital department of the Middle district, which included the States between the Hudson and the Potomac. In offering the situation to the doctor, he writes, "You know how far you may be benefited or injured by such an appointment, and whether it is advisable or practicable for you to quit your family and practice at this time. I request, as a friend, that my proposing this matter to you may have no influence upon your acceptance of it. I have no other end in view than to serve you." Dr. Craik, it will be found, remained his attached and devoted friend through life.

It had been Washington's earnest wish in the early part of the spring, to take advantage of the inactivity of the enemy, and attempt some "capital stroke" for the benefit of the next campaign; but the want of troops prevented him. He now planned a night expedition for Putnam, exactly suited to the humor of the old general. He was to descend the Hudson in boats, surprise Fort Independence at Spyt den Duivel Creek, capture the garrison, and sweep the road between that post and the Highlands. Putnam was all on fire for the enterprise, when movements on the part of the enemy, seemingly indicative of a design upon Philadelphia, obliged Washington to abandon the project, and exert all his vigilance in watching the hostile operations in the Jerseys.

Accordingly, towards the end of May, he broke up his cantonments at Morristown, and shifted his camp to

Middlebrook, within ten miles of Brunswick. His whole force fit for duty was now about seven thousand three hundred men, all from the States south of the Hudson. There were forty-three regiments, forming ten brigades, commanded by Brigadiers Muhlenberg, Weedon, Woodford, Scott, Smallwood, Deborre, Wayne, Dehaas, Conway, and Maxwell. These were apportioned into five divisions of two brigades each, under Major-generals Greene, Stephen, Sullivan, Lincoln, and Stirling. The artillery was commanded by Knox. Sullivan, with his division, was stationed on the right at Princeton. With the rest of his force Washington fortified himself in a position naturally strong, among hills, in the rear of the village of Middlebrook. His camp was, on all sides, difficult of approach, and he rendered it still more so by intrenchments. The high grounds about it commanded a wide view of the country around Brunswick, the road to Philadelphia, and the course of the Raritan, so that the enemy could make no important movement on land, without his perceiving it.

It was now the beautiful season of the year, and the troops from their height beheld a fertile and well cultivated country spread before them, "painted with meadows, green fields, and orchards, studded with villages, and affording abundant supplies and forage." A part of their duty was to guard it from the ravage of the enemy, while they held themselves ready to counteract his movements in every direction.

On the 31st of May, reports were brought to camp that a fleet of a hundred sail had left New York, and stood out to sea. Whither bound, and how freighted, was unknown. If they carried troops, their destination might be Delaware Bay. Eighteen transports, also, had arrived at New York, with troops in foreign uniforms. Were they those which had been in Canada, or others immediately from Germany? Those who had reconnoitered them with glasses could not tell. All was matter of anxious conjecture.

Lest the fleet which had put to sea should be bound further south than Delaware Bay, Washington instantly wrote to Patrick Henry, at that time governor of Virginia, putting him on his guard. "Should this fleet arrive on your coast, and the enemy attempt to penetrate the country, or make incursions, I would recommend that the earliest opposition be made by parties and detachments of militia, without waiting to collect a large body. I am convinced that this would be attended with the most salutary consequences, and that greater advantages would be derived from it, than by deferring the opposition till you assembled a number equal to that of the enemy."

The troops in foreign uniforms which had landed from the transports, proved to be Anspachers, and other German mercenaries; there were British reinforcements also; and, what was particularly needed, a supply of tents and camp equipage. Sir William Howe had been

waiting for the latter, and likewise until the ground should be covered with grass.*

The country was now in full verdure, affording "green forage" in abundance, and all things seemed to Sir William propitious for the opening of the campaign. Early in June, therefore, he gave up ease and gayety, and luxurious life at New York, and crossing into the Jerseys, set up his head-quarters at Brunswick.

As soon as Washington ascertained that Sir William's attention was completely turned to this quarter, he determined to strengthen his position with all the force that could be spared from other parts, so as to be able, in case a favorable opportunity presented, to make an attack upon the enemy; in the meantime, he would harass them with his light militia troops, aided by a few Continentals, so as to weaken their numbers by continual skirmishes. With this view, he ordered General Putnam to send down most of the continental troops from Peekskill, leaving only a number sufficient, in conjunction with the militia, to guard that post against surprise. They were to proceed in three divisions, under Generals Parsons, McDougall, and Glover, at one day's march distant from each other.

Arnold, in this critical juncture, had been put in command of Philadelphia, a post which he had been induced to accept, although the question of rank had not been

* Evidence of Major-general Grey before the House of Commons

adjusted to his satisfaction. His command embraced the western bank of the Delaware with all its fords and passes, and he took up his station there with a strong body of militia, supported by a few Continentals, to oppose any attempt of the enemy to cross the river. He was instructed by Washington to give him notice by expresses, posted on the road, if any fleet should appear in Delaware Bay; and to endeavor to concert signals with the camp of Sullivan at Princeton, by alarm fires upon the hills.

On the night of the 13th of June, General Howe sallied forth in great force from Brunswick, as if pushing directly for the Delaware, but his advanced guard halted at Somerset court-house, about eight or nine miles distant. Apprised of this movement, Washington at daybreak reconnoitered the enemy from the heights before the camp. He observed their front halting at the court-house, but a few miles distant, while troops and artillery were grouped here and there along the road, and the rear-guard was still at Brunswick. It was a question with Washington and his generals, as they reconnoitered the enemy with their glasses, whether this was a real move toward Philadelphia, or merely a lure to tempt them down from their strong position. In this uncertainty, Washington drew out his army in battle array along the heights, but kept quiet. In the present state of his forces it was his plan not to risk a general action; but, should the enemy really march toward the Dela-

ware, to hang heavily upon their rear. Their principal difficulty would be in crossing that river, and there, he trusted, they would meet with spirited opposition from the continental troops and militia, stationed on the western side under Arnold and Mifflin.

The British took up a strong position, having Millstone Creek on their left, the Raritan all along their front, and their right resting on Brunswick, and proceeded to fortify themselves with bastions.

While thus anxiously situated, Washington, on the 14th, received a letter from Colonel Reed, his former secretary and confidential friend. A coolness had existed on the general's part, ever since he had unwarily opened the satirical letter of General Lee; yet he had acted towards Reed with his habitual highmindedness, and had recently nominated him as general of cavalry. The latter had deeply deplored the interruption of their once unreserved intercourse: he had long, he said, desired to have one hour of private conversation with Washington on the subject of Lee's letter, but had deferred it in the hope of obtaining his own letter to which that was an answer. In that he had been disappointed by Lee's captivity. On the present occasion, Reed's heart was full, and he refers to former times in language that is really touching:—

"I am sensible, my dear sir," writes he, "how difficult it is to regain lost friendship; but the consciousness of never having justly forfeited yours, and the hope that it

may be in my power fully to convince you of it, are some consolation for an event which I never think of but with the greatest concern. In the meantime, my dear general, let me entreat you to judge of me by realities, not by appearances; and believe that I never entertained or expressed a sentiment incompatible with that regard I professed for your person and character, and which, whether I shall be so happy as to possess your future good opinion or not, I shall carry to my grave with me.

"A late perusal of the letters you honored me with at Cambridge and New York, last year, afforded me a melancholy pleasure. I cannot help acknowledging myself deeply affected, in a comparison with those which I have since received. I should not, my dear sir, have trespassed on your time and patience at this juncture so long, but that a former letter upon this subject I fear has miscarried; and whatever may be my future destination and course of life, I could not support the reflection of being thought ungrateful and insincere to a friendship which was equally my pride and my pleasure. May God Almighty crown your virtue, my dear and much respected general, with deserved success, and make your life as happy and honorable to yourself as it has been useful to your country."

The heart of Washington was moved by this appeal, and though in the midst of military preparations, with a hostile army at hand, he detained Colonel Reed's messenger long enough to write a short letter in reply: "to

thank you," said he, "as I do most sincerely, for the friendly and affectionate sentiments contained in yours towards me, and to assure you that I am perfectly convinced of the sincerity of them.

"True it is, I felt myself hurt by a certain letter which appeared at that time to be the echo of one from you; I was hurt—not because I thought my judgment wronged by the expressions contained in it, but because the same sentiments were not communicated immediately to myself. The favorable manner in which your opinions, upon all occasions, had been received, the impressions they made, and the unreserved manner in which I wished and required them to be given, entitled me, I thought, to your advice upon any point in which I appeared to be wanting. To meet with anything, then, that carried with it a complexion of withholding that advice from me, and censuring my conduct to another, was such an argument of disingenuity, that I was not a little mortified at it. However, I am perfectly satisfied that matters were not as they appeared from the letter alluded to."

Washington was not of a distrustful spirit. From this moment, we are told that all estrangement disappeared, and the ancient relations of friendly confidence between him and Colonel Reed were restored.* His whole conduct throughout the affair bears evidence of his candor and magnanimity.

* *Life of Reed*, by his grandson.

CHAPTER VIII.

FEIGNED MOVEMENTS OF SIR WILLIAM HOWE.—BAFFLING CAUTION OF WASHINGTON.—RUMORED INROADS FROM THE NORTH.—SCHUYLER APPLIES FOR REINFORCEMENTS.—RENEWED SCHEMES OF HOWE TO DRAW WASHINGTON FROM HIS STRONGHOLD.—SKIRMISH BETWEEN CORNWALLIS AND LORD STIRLING.—THE ENEMY EVACUATE THE JERSEYS.—PERPLEXITY AS TO THEIR NEXT MOVEMENT.—A HOSTILE FLEET ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN.—BURGOYNE APPROACHING TICONDEROGA.—SPECULATIONS OF WASHINGTON.—HIS PURPOSE OF KEEPING SIR WILLIAM HOWE FROM ASCENDING THE HUDSON.—ORDERS GEORGE CLINTON TO CALL OUT MILITIA FROM ULSTER AND ORANGE COUNTIES.—SENDS SULLIVAN TOWARDS THE HIGHLANDS.—MOVES HIS OWN CAMP BACK TO MORRISTOWN.—STIR AMONG THE SHIPPING.—THEIR DESTINATION SURMISED TO BE PHILADELPHIA.—A DINNER AT HEAD-QUARTERS.—ALEXANDER HAMILTON.—GRAYDON'S RUEFUL DESCRIPTION OF THE ARMY.—HIS CHARACTER OF WAYNE.

THE American and British armies, strongly posted, as we have shown, the former along the heights of Middlebrook, the other beyond the Raritan, remained four days grimly regarding each other: both waiting to be attacked. The Jersey militia, which now turned out with alacrity, repaired, some to Washington's camp, others to that of Sullivan. The latter had fallen back from Princeton, and taken a position behind the Sourland Hills.

Howe pushed out detachments, and made several feints,

as if to pass by the American camp and march to the Delaware; but Washington was not to be deceived. "The enemy will not move that way," said he, "until they have given this army a severe blow. The risk would be too great to attempt to cross a river where they must expect to meet a formidable opposition in front, and would have such a force as ours in their rear." He kept on the heights, therefore, and strengthened his intrenchments.

Baffled in these attempts to draw his cautious adversary into a general action, Howe, on the 19th, suddenly broke up his camp, and pretended to return with some precipitation to Brunswick, burning as he went several valuable dwelling-houses. Washington's light troops hovered round the enemy as far as the Raritan and Millstone, which secured their flanks, would permit; but the main army kept to its stronghold on the heights.

On the next day came warlike news from the North. Amesbury, a British spy, had been seized and examined by Schuyler. Burgoyne was stated as being arrived at Quebec to command the forces in an invasion from Canada. While he advanced with his main force by Lake Champlain, a detachment of British troops, Canadians and Indians, led by Sir John Johnson, was to penetrate by Oswego to the Mohawk River, and place itself between Fort Stanwix and Fort Edward.

If this information was correct, Ticonderoga would soon be attacked. The force there might be sufficient for

its defense, but Schuyler would have no troops to oppose the inroad of Sir John Johnson, and he urged a reinforcement. Washington forthwith sent orders to Putnam to procure sloops, and hold four Massachusetts regiments in readiness to go up the river at a moment's warning. Still, if the information of the spy was correct, he doubted the ability of the enemy to carry the reported plan into effect. It did not appear that Burgoyne had brought any reinforcements from Europe. If so, he could not move with a greater force than five thousand men. The garrison at Ticonderoga was sufficiently strong, according to former accounts, to hold it against an attack. Burgoyne certainly would never leave it in his rear, and if he invested it, he would not have a sufficient number left to send one body to Oswego and another to cut off the communications between Fort Edward and Fort George. Such was Washington's reasoning in a reply to Schuyler. In the meantime he retained his mind unflurried by these new rumors; keeping from his heights a vigilant eye upon General Howe.

On the 22d, Sir William again marched out of Brunswick, but this time proceeded towards Amboy, again burning several houses on the way; hoping, perhaps, that the sight of columns of smoke rising from a ravaged country would irritate the Americans and provoke an attack. Washington sent out three brigades under General Greene to fall upon the rear of the enemy, while Morgan hung upon their skirts with his riflemen. At the

same time the army remained paraded on the heights, ready to yield support, if necessary.

Finding that Howe had actually sent his heavy baggage and part of his troops over to Staten Island by a bridge of boats which he had thrown across, Washington, on the 24th, left the heights and descended to Quibbletown (now New Market), six or seven miles on the road to Amboy, to be nearer at hand for the protection of his advanced parties; while Lord Stirling with his division and some light troops was at Matouchin church, closer to the enemy's lines, to watch their motions, and be ready to harass them while crossing to the island.

General Howe now thought he had gained his point. Recalling those who had crossed, he formed his troops into two columns, the right led by Cornwallis, the left by himself, and marched back rapidly by different routes from Amboy. He had three objects in view: to cut off the principal advanced parties of the Americans; to come up with and bring the main body into an engagement near Quibbletown; or that Lord Cornwallis, making a considerable circuit to the right, should turn the left of Washington's position, get to the heights, take possession of the passes, and oblige him to abandon that stronghold where he had hitherto been so secure.*

Washington, however, had timely notice of his movements, and penetrating his design, regained his fortified

* *Civil War in America*, vol. i. p. 247.

camp at Middlebrook, and secured the passes of the mountains. He then detached a body of light troops under Brigadier-general Scott, together with Morgan's riflemen, to hang on the flank of the enemy and watch their motions.

Cornwallis, in his circuitous march, dispersed the light parties of the advance, but fell in with Lord Stirling's division, strongly posted in a woody country, and well covered by artillery judiciously disposed. A sharp skirmish ensued, when the Americans gave way and retreated to the hills, with the loss of a few men and three field-pieces; while the British halted at Westfield, disappointed in the main objects of their enterprise. They remained at Westfield until the afternoon of the 27th, when they moved toward Spanktown (now Rahway), plundering all before them, and, it is said, burning several houses; but pursued and harassed the whole way by the American light troops.*

Perceiving that every scheme of bringing the Americans to a general action, or at least of withdrawing them from their strongholds, was rendered abortive by the caution and prudence of Washington, and aware of the madness of attempting to march to the Delaware, through a hostile country, with such a force in his rear, Sir William Howe broke up his head-quarters at Amboy on the last of June, and crossed over to Staten Island on the

* Letter to the President of Congress, 28th June, 1777.

floating bridge; his troops that were encamped opposite to Amboy struck their tents on the following day, and marched off to the old camping ground on the bay of New York; the ships got under way, and moved down round the island; and it was soon apparent, that at length the enemy had really evacuated the Jerseys.

The question now was, what would be their next move? A great stir among the shipping seemed to indicate an expedition by water. But whither? Circumstances occurred to perplex the question.

Scarce had the last tent been struck, and the last transport disappeared from before Amboy, when intelligence arrived from General St. Clair, announcing the appearance of a hostile fleet on Lake Champlain, and that General Burgoyne with the whole Canada army was approaching Ticonderoga. The judgment and circumspection of Washington were never more severely put to the proof. Was this merely a diversion with a small force of light troops and Indians, intended to occupy the attention of the American forces in that quarter, while the main body of the army in Canada should come round by sea, and form a junction with the army under Howe? But General Burgoyne, in Washington's opinion, was a man of too much spirit and enterprise to return from England merely to execute a plan from which no honor was to be derived. Did he really intend to break through by the way of Ticonderoga? In that case it must be Howe's plan to coöperate with him. Had all the recent

maneuvers of the enemy in the Jerseys, which had appeared so enigmatical to Washington, been merely a stratagem to amuse him until they should receive intelligence of the movements of Burgoyne? If so, Sir William must soon throw off the mask. His next move, in such case, would be to ascend the Hudson, seize on the Highland passes before Washington could form a union with the troops stationed there, and thus open the way for the junction with Burgoyne. Should Washington, however, on such a presumption, hasten with his troops to Peekskill, leaving General Howe on Staten Island, what would prevent the latter from pushing to Philadelphia by South Amboy or any other route?

Such were the perplexities and difficulties presenting themselves under every aspect of the case, and discussed by Washington in his correspondence with his accustomed clearness. In this dilemma he sent generals Parsons and Varnum with a couple of brigades in all haste to Peekskill, and wrote to generals George Clinton and Putnam; the former to call out the New York militia from Orange and Ulster counties; the latter to summon the militia from Connecticut; and as soon as such reinforcements should be at hand, to despatch four of the strongest Massachusetts regiments to the aid of Ticonderoga; at the same time the expediency was suggested to General Schuyler, of having all the cattle and vehicles removed from such parts of the country which he might think the enemy intended to penetrate.

General Sullivan, moreover, was ordered to advance with his division towards the Highlands as far as Pompton, while Washington moved his own camp back to Morristown, to be ready either to push on to the Highlands, or fall back upon his recent position at Middlebrook, according to the movements of the enemy. "If I can keep General Howe below the Highlands," said he, "I think their schemes will be entirely baffled."

Deserters from Staten Island and New York soon brought word to the camp that transports were being fitted up with berths for horses, and taking in three weeks' supply of water and provender. All this indicated some other destination than that of the Hudson. Lest an attempt on the Eastern States should be intended, Washington sent a circular to their governors to put them on their guard.

In the midst of his various cares, his yeoman soldiery, the Jersey militia, were not forgotten. It was their harvest time; and the State being evacuated, there was no immediate call for their services; he dismissed, therefore, almost the whole of them to their homes.

Captain Graydon, whose memoirs we have heretofore had occasion to quote, paid a visit to the camp at this juncture, in company with Colonel Miles and Major West, all American prisoners on Long Island, but who had been liberated on parole. Graydon remarks that, to their great surprise, they saw no military parade upon their journey, nor any indication of martial vigor on the part of the

country. Here and there a militia man with his contrasted colored cape and facings; doubtless some one who had received his furlough, and was bound home to his farm. Captains, majors, and colonels abounded in the land, but were not to be found at the head of their men.

When he arrived at the camp, he could see nothing which deserved the name of army. "I was told, indeed," remarks he, "that it was much weakened by detachments, and I was glad to find there was some cause for the present paucity of soldiers. I could not doubt, however, that things were going on well. The commander-in-chief and all about him were in excellent spirits." The three officers waited on Washington at his marquee in the evening. In the course of conversation, he asked them what they conceived to be the objects of General Howe. Colonel Miles replied, a coöperation with the Northern army by means of the Hudson. Washington acknowledged that indications and probabilities tended to that conclusion; nevertheless, he had little doubt the object of Howe was Philadelphia.

Graydon and his companions dined the next day at head-quarters; there was a large party, in which were several ladies. Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who, in the preceding month of April, had been received into Washington's family as aide-de-camp, presided at the head of the table, and "acquitted himself," writes Graydon, "with an ease, propriety, and vivacity which gave me the most favorable impression of his talents and accomplishments."

We may here observe that the energy, skill, and intelligence displayed by Hamilton throughout the last year's campaign, whenever his limited command gave him opportunity of evincing them, had won his entrance to headquarters; where his quick discernment and precocious judgment were soon fully appreciated. Strangers were surprised to see a youth, scarce twenty years of age, received into the implicit confidence, and admitted into the gravest counsels of a man like Washington. While his uncommon talents thus commanded respect, rarely inspired by one of his years, his juvenile appearance and buoyant spirit made him a universal favorite. Harrison, the "old secretary," much his senior, looked upon him with an almost paternal eye, and regarding his diminutive size and towering spirit, used to call him "the little lion;" while Washington would now and then speak of him by the cherishing appellation of "my boy."*

The following is Graydon's amusing account of Wayne, whom he visited at his quarters. "He entertained the most sovereign contempt for the enemy. In his confident way, he affirmed that the two armies had inter-

* Communicated to the author by the late Mrs. Hamilton.

NOTE.—A veteran officer of the Revolution used to speak in his old days of the occasion on which he first saw Hamilton. It was during the memorable retreat through the Jerseys. "I noticed," said he, "a youth, a mere stripling, small, slender, almost delicate in frame, marching beside a piece of artillery with a cocked hat pulled down over his eyes, apparently lost in thought, with his hand resting on the cannon, and every now and then patting it as he mused, as if it were a favorite horse, or a pet plaything."

changed their original modes of warfare. That for our parts, we had thrown away the shovel, and the British had taken it up; as they dared not face us without the cover of an intrenchment. I made some allowance for the fervid manner of the general, who, though unquestionably as brave a man as any in the army, was nevertheless somewhat addicted to the vaunting style of Marshal Villers, a man who, like himself, could fight as well as brag."

Graydon speaks of the motley, shabby clothing of the troops. "Even in General Wayne himself, there was in this particular a considerable falling off. His quondam regimentals as colonel of the 4th battalion were, I think, blue and white, in which he had been accustomed to appear with exemplary neatness; whereas he was now dressed in character for Macheath or Captain Gibbet, in a dingy red coat, with a black rusty cravat and tarnished hat." Wayne was doubtless still rusty from his campaign in the north.

Graydon, during his recent captivity, had been accustomed to the sight of British troops in the completeness of martial array, and looked with a rueful eye on patriotism in rags. From all that he saw at the camp, he suspected affairs were not in a prosperous train, notwithstanding the cheerful countenances at head-quarters. There appeared to be a want of animated coöperation both on the part of the government and the people. "General Washington, with the little remnant of his

army at Morristown, seemed left to scuffle for liberty, like another Cato at Utica."*

We will now turn to the North, and lift the curtain for a moment, to give the reader a glance at affairs in that quarter, about which there were such dubious rumors.

* Graydon's *Memoirs*, 282.

CHAPTER IX.

BRITISH INVASION FROM CANADA.—THE PLAN.—COMPOSITION OF THE INVADING ARMY.—SCHUYLER ON THE ALERT.—HIS SPECULATIONS AS TO THE ENEMY'S DESIGNS.—BURGOYNE ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN.—HIS WAR-SPEECH TO HIS INDIAN ALLIES.—SIGNS OF HIS APPROACH DESCRIED FROM TICONDEROGA.—CORRESPONDENCE ON THE SUBJECT BETWEEN ST. CLAIR, MAJOR LIVINGSTON, AND SCHUYLER.—BURGOYNE INTRENCHES NEAR TICONDEROGA.—HIS PROCLAMATION.—SCHUYLER'S EXERTIONS AT ALBANY TO FORWARD REINFORCEMENTS.—HEARS THAT TICONDEROGA IS EVACUATED.—MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF ST. CLAIR AND HIS TROOPS.—AMAZEMENT AND CONCERN OF WASHINGTON.—ORDERS REINFORCEMENTS TO SCHUYLER AT FORT EDWARD, AND TO PUTNAM AT PEEKSKILL.—ADVANCES WITH HIS MAIN ARMY TO THE CLOVE.—HIS HOPEFUL SPIRIT MANIFESTED.

THE armament advancing against Ticonderoga, of which General St. Clair had given intelligence, was not a mere diversion, but a regular invasion; the plan of which had been devised by the king, Lord George Germaine, and General Burgoyne, the latter having returned to England from Canada in the preceding year. The junction of the two armies—that in Canada and that under General Howe in New York—was considered the speediest mode of quelling the rebellion; and as the security and good government of Canada required the presence of Governor Sir Guy Carleton,

three thousand men were to remain there with him; the residue of the army was to be employed upon two expeditions; the one under General Burgoyne, who was to force his way to Albany, the other under Lieutenant-colonel St. Leger, who was to make a diversion on the Mohawk River.

The invading army was composed of three thousand seven hundred and twenty-four British rank and file, three thousand and sixteen Germans, mostly Brunswickers, two hundred and fifty Canadians, and four hundred Indians; beside these there were four hundred and seventy-three artillery-men, in all nearly eight thousand men. The army was admirably appointed. Its brass train of artillery was extolled as perhaps the finest ever allotted to an army of the size. General Phillips, who commanded the artillery, had gained great reputation in the wars in Germany. Brigadier-generals Fraser, Powel, and Hamilton, were also officers of distinguished merit. So was Major-general the Baron Riedesel, a Brunswicker, who commanded the German troops.

While Burgoyne with the main force proceeded from St. John's, Colonel St. Leger, with a detachment of regulars and Canadians about seven hundred strong, was to land at Oswego, and, guided by Sir John Johnson at the head of his loyalist volunteers, tory refugees from his former neighborhood, and a body of Indians, was to enter the Mohawk country, draw the attention of General Schuyler in that direction, attack Fort Stanwix, and, having

ravaged the valley of the Mohawk, rejoin Burgoyne at Albany, where it was expected they would make a triumphant junction with the army of Sir William Howe.

General Burgoyne left St. John's on the 16th of June. Some idea may be formed of his buoyant anticipation of a triumphant progress through the country, by the manifold and lumbering appurtenances of a European camp with which his army was encumbered. In this respect he had committed the same error in his campaign through a wilderness of lakes and forests, that had once embarrassed the unfortunate Braddock in his march across the mountains of Virginia.

Schuyler was uncertain as to the plans and force of the enemy. If information gathered from scouts and a captured spy might be relied on, Ticonderoga would soon be attacked; but he trusted the garrison was sufficient to maintain it. This information he transmitted to Washington from Fort Edward on the 16th, the very day that Burgoyne embarked at St. John's.

On the following day Schuyler was at Ticonderoga. The works were not in such a state of forwardness as he had anticipated, owing to the tardy arrival of troops, and the want of a sufficient number of artificers. The works in question related chiefly to Mount Independence, a high circular hill on the east side of the lake, immediately opposite to the old fort, and considered the most defensible. A star fort with pickets crowned the summit of the hill, which was table land; half way down the side

of the hill was a battery, and at its foot were strongly intrenched works well mounted with cannon. Here the French General de Fermois, who had charge of this fort, was posted.

As this part of Lake Champlain is narrow, a connection was kept up between the two forts by a floating bridge, supported on twenty-two sunken piers in caissons, formed of very strong timber. Between the piers were separate floats, fifty feet long and twelve feet wide, strongly connected by iron chains and rivets. On the north side of the bridge was a boom, composed of large pieces of timber, secured by riveted bolts, and beside this was a double iron chain with links an inch and a half square. The bridge, boom, and chain were four hundred yards in length. This immense work, the labor of months, on which no expense had been spared, was intended, while it afforded a communication between the two forts, to protect the upper part of the lake, presenting, under cover of their guns, a barrier, which it was presumed no hostile ship would be able to break through.

Having noted the state of affairs and the wants of the garrison, Schuyler hastened to Fort George, whence he sent on provisions for upwards of sixty days; and from the banks of the Hudson additional carpenters and working cattle. "Business will now go in better train, and I hope with much more spirit," writes he to Congress; "and I trust we shall still be able to put everything in such order as to give the enemy a good reception, and, I

hope, a repulse, should they attempt a real attack, which I conjecture will not be soon, if at all; although I expect they will approach with their fleet to keep us in alarm, and to draw our attention from other quarters where they may mean a real attack."

His idea was that, while their fleet and a small body of troops might appear before Ticonderoga, and keep up continual alarms, the main army might march from St. François and St. John's towards the Connecticut River, and make an attempt on the Eastern States. "A maneuver of this kind," observes he, "would be in General Burgoyne's way, and, if successful, would be attended with much honor to him. . . . . I am the more confirmed in this conjecture, as the enemy cannot be ignorant how very difficult, if not impossible, it will be for them to penetrate to Albany, unless in losing Ticonderoga we should lose not only all our cannon, but most of the army designed for this department."

In the meantime, Burgoyne, with his amphibious and semi-barbarous armaments was advancing up the lake. On the 21st of June he encamped at the River Boquet, several miles north of Crown Point; here he gave a war feast to his savage allies, and made them a speech in that pompous and half poetical vein in which it is the absurd practice to address our savages, and which is commonly reduced to flat prose by their interpreters. At the same time he was strenuous in enjoining humanity toward prisoners, dwelling on the difference between

ordinary wars carried on against a common enemy, and this against a country in rebellion, where the hostile parties were of the same blood, and loyal subjects of the crown might be confounded with the rebellious. It was a speech intended to excite their ardor, but restrain their cruelty, a difficult medium to attain with Indian warriors.

The garrison of Ticonderoga, meanwhile, were anxiously on the lookout. Their fortress, built on a hill, commanded an extensive prospect over the bright and beautiful lake and its surrounding forests, but there were long points and promontories at a distance to intercept the view.

By the 24th, scouts began to bring in word of the approaching foe. Bark canoes had been seen filled with white men and savages. Then three vessels under sail, and one at anchor, above Split Rock, and behind it the radeau *Thunderer*, noted in the last year's naval fight. Anon came word of encampments sufficient for a large body of troops, on both sides of Gilliland's Creek, with bateaux plying about its waters, and painted warriors gliding about in canoes ; while a number of smokes rising out of the forest at a distance beyond, gave signs of an Indian camp.

St. Clair wrote word of all this to Schuyler, and that it was supposed the enemy were waiting the arrival of more force ; he did not, however, think they intended to attack, but to harass, for the purpose of giving confidence to the Indians.

Schuyler transmitted a copy of St. Clair's letter to Washington. "If the enemy's object is not to attack Ticonderoga," writes he, "I suspect their movement is intended to cover an attempt on New Hampshire, or the Mohawk River, or to cut off the communication between Fort Edward and Fort George, or perhaps all three, the more to distract us and divide our force." He urged Washington for reinforcements as soon as possible. At the same time he wrote to St. Clair, to keep scouts on the east side of the lake near the road leading from St. John's to New Hampshire, and on the west, on the road leading to the north branch of the Hudson. This done, he hastened to Albany to forward reinforcements and bring up the militia.

While there, he received word from St. Clair, that the enemy's fleet and army were arrived at Crown Point, and had sent off detachments, one up Otter Creek to cut off the communication by Skenesborough; and another on the west side of the lake to cut off Fort George. It was evident a real attack on Ticonderoga was intended. Claims for assistance came hurrying on from other quarters. A large force (St. Leger's) was said to be arrived at Oswego, and Sir John Johnson with his myrmidons on his way to attack Fort Schuyler, the garrison of which was weak and poorly supplied with cannon.

Schuyler bestirs himself with his usual zeal amid the thickening alarms. He writes urgent letters to the Committee of Safety of New York, to General Putnam at

Peekskill, to the governor of Connecticut, to the president of Massachusetts, to the committee of Berkshire, and lastly to Washington, stating the impending dangers and imploring reinforcements. He exhorts General Herkimer to keep the militia of Tryon County in readiness to protect the western frontier and to check the inroad of Sir John Johnson, and he assures St. Clair that he will move to his aid with the militia of New York, as soon as he can collect them.

Dangers accumulate at Ticonderoga according to advices from St. Clair (28th). Seven of the enemy's vessels are lying at Crown Point; the rest of their fleet is probably but a little lower down. Morning guns are heard distinctly at various places. Some troops have debarked and encamped at Chimney Point. There is no prospect, he says, of being able to defend Ticonderoga unless militia come in, and he has thought of calling in those from Berkshire. "Should the enemy invest and blockade us," writes he, "we are infallibly ruined; we shall be obliged to abandon this side (of the lake), and then they will soon force the other from us, nor do I see that a retreat will in any shape be practicable. Everything, however, shall be done that is practicable to frustrate the enemy's designs; but what can be expected from troops ill-armed, naked, and unaccoutred?"

Schuyler's aide-de-camp, Major Livingston,* who had

* Henry Brockholst Livingston: in after years judge of the Supreme Court of the United States.

been detained at Ticonderoga by indisposition, writes to him (June 30th) in a different vein, and presents a young man's view of affairs.

"The enemy, after giving us several alarms, made their appearance early this morning off Three Mile Point, in eighteen gunboats, and, about nine, landed a party of two or three hundred Indians and Canadians. These soon fell in with a scout from us, but being superior in number, obliged them to retreat, though without any loss on our side. The Indians then marched to the front of the French lines, drove in a picket guard, and came so near as to wound two men who were standing behind the works. They have stopped the communication between this and Lake George.

"We have a fair view of their boats, but cannot see that they have brought many regulars with them. At least the number of red-coats in them is very small. The wind having been contrary for several days, has prevented their fleet from coming up. The first fair breeze I shall expect to see them. Many bets are depending that we shall be attacked in the course of this week. Our troops are determined, and in great spirits. They wish to be permitted to drive the savages from Three Mile Point, but General St. Clair chooses to act on the sure side, and risk nothing. The few alarms we have had have been of great service in making the men alert and vigilant; but I am afraid the enemy will repeat them so frequently as to throw them into their former

indolence and inattention. General St. Clair has taken the precaution to move most of the stores to the mount [Independence]. This moment two ships and as many sloops have hove in sight. The spirits of the men seem to increase in proportion to the number of the enemy.

"I cannot but esteem myself fortunate that indisposition prevented my returning with you, as it has given me an opportunity of being present at a battle, in which I promise myself the pleasure of seeing our army flushed with victory." *

The enemy came advancing up the lake on the 30th, their main body under Burgoyne on the west side, the German reserve under Baron Riedesel on the east; communication being maintained by frigates and gunboats, which, in a manner, kept pace between them. It was a magnificent array of warlike means; and the sound of drum and trumpet along the shores, and now and then the thundering of a cannon from the ships, were singularly in contrast with the usual silence of a region little better than a wilderness.

On the first of July, Burgoyne encamped four miles north of Ticonderoga, and began to intrench, and to throw a boom across the lake. His advanced guard under General Fraser took post at Three Mile Point, and the ships anchored just out of gunshot of the fort.

Here he issued a proclamation still more magnilo-

* Letter of Major Livingston to General Schuyler, MS.

quent than his speech to the Indians, denouncing woe to all who should persist in rebellion, and laying particular stress upon his means, with the aid of the Indians, to overtake the hardiest enemies of Great Britain and America, wherever they might lurk.

General St. Clair was a gallant Scotchman, who had seen service in the old French war as well as in this, and beheld the force arrayed against him without dismay. It is true his garrison was not so numerous as it had been represented to Washington, not exceeding three thousand five hundred men, of whom nine hundred were militia. They were badly equipped also, and few had bayonets; yet as Major Livingston reported, they were in good heart. St. Clair confided, however, in the strength of his position and the works which had been constructed in connection with it, and trusted he should be able to resist any attempt to take it by storm.

Schuyler at this time was at Albany, sending up reinforcements of continental troops and militia, and awaiting the arrival of further reinforcements, for which sloops had been sent down to Peekskill.

He was endeavoring also to provide for the security of the department in other quarters. The savages had been scalping in the neighborhood of Fort Schuyler; a set of renegade Indians were harassing the settlements on the Susquehanna; and the threatenings of Brant, the famous Indian chief, and the prospect of a British inroad by the way of Oswego, had spread terror through Tryon

County, the inhabitants of which called upon him for support.

"The enemy are harassing us in every quarter of this department," writes he. "I am, however, happily, thank God, in full health and spirits to enable me to extend my attention to those various quarters, and hope we shall all do well." *

The enemy's maneuver of intrenching themselves and throwing a boom across the lake, of which St. Clair informed him, made him doubt of their being in great force, or intending a serious attack. "I shall have great hopes," writes he to St. Clair, "if General Burgoyne continues in the vicinity of your post until we get up, and dares risk an engagement, we shall give a good account of him." †

To General Herkimer, who commanded the militia in Tryon County, he writes in the same encouraging strain. "From intelligence which I have just now received from Ticonderoga, I am not very apprehensive that any great effort will be made against the Mohawk River. I shall, however, keep a watchful eye to the preservation of the western quarter, and have therefore directed Colonel Van Schaick to remain in Tryon County with the [continental] troops under his command.

"If we act with vigor and spirit, we have nothing to fear; but if once despondency takes place, the worst con-

* Letter to the Hon. George Clymer.

† Schuyler's Letter Book.

sequences are to be apprehended. It is, therefore, incumbent on you to labor to keep up the spirits of the people."

In the meantime he awaited the arrival of the troops from Peekskill with impatience. On the 5th they had not appeared. "The moment they do," writes he, "I shall move with them. If they do not arrive by to-morrow, I go without them, and will do the best I can with the militia." He actually did set out at 8 o'clock on the morning of the 7th.

Such was the state of affairs in the north, of which Washington from time to time had been informed. An attack on Ticonderoga appeared to be impending; but as the garrison was in good heart, the commander resolute, and troops were on the way to reinforce him, a spirited, and perhaps successful resistance was anticipated by Washington. His surprise may therefore be imagined, on receiving a letter from Schuyler dated July 7th, conveying the astounding intelligence that Ticonderoga was evacuated!

Schuyler had just received the news at Stillwater on the Hudson, when on his way with reinforcements for the fortress. The first account was so vague that Washington hoped it might prove incorrect. It was confirmed by another letter from Schuyler, dated on the 9th at Fort Edward. A part of the garrison had been pursued by a detachment of the enemy as far as Fort Anne in that neighborhood, where the latter had been repulsed; as to

St. Clair himself and the main part of his forces, they had thrown themselves into the forest, and nothing was known what had become of them!

"I am here," writes Schuyler, "at the head of a handful of men, not above fifteen hundred, with little ammunition, not above five rounds to a man, having neither balls nor lead to make any. The country is in the deepest consternation; no carriages to remove the stores from Fort George, which I expect every moment to hear is attacked; and what adds to my distress is, that a report prevails that I had given orders for the evacuation of Ticonderoga."

Washington was totally at a loss to account for St. Clair's movement. To abandon a fortress which he had recently pronounced so defensible: and to abandon it apparently without firing a gun! and then the strange uncertainty as to his subsequent fortunes, and the whereabouts of himself and the main body of his troops! "The affair," writes Washington, "is so mysterious that it baffles even conjecture."

His first attention was to supply the wants of General Schuyler. An express was sent to Springfield for musket cartridges, gunpowder, lead, and cartridge papers. Ten pieces of artillery with harness and proper officers were to be forwarded from Peekskill, as well as intrenching tools. Of tents he had none to furnish, neither could heavy cannon be spared from the defense of the Highlands.

Six hundred recruits, on their march from Massachusetts to Peekskill, were ordered to repair to the reinforcement of Schuyler; this was all the force that Washington could venture at this moment to send to his aid; but this addition to his troops, supposing those under St. Clair should have come in, and any number of militia have turned out, would probably form an army equal, if not superior, to that said to be under Burgoyne. Besides, it was Washington's idea that the latter would suspend his operations until General Howe should make a movement in concert. Supposing that movement would be an immediate attempt against the Highlands, he ordered Sullivan with his division to Peekskill to reinforce General Putnam. At the same time he advanced with his main army to Pompton, and thence to the Clove, a rugged defile through the Highlands on the west side of the Hudson. Here he encamped within eighteen miles of the river, to watch, and be at hand to oppose the designs of Sir William Howe, whatever might be their direction.

On the morning of the 14th came another letter from Schuyler, dated Fort Edward, July 10th. He had that morning received the first tidings of St. Clair and his missing troops, and of their being fifty miles east of him.

Washington hailed the intelligence with that hopeful spirit which improved every ray of light in the darkest moments. "I am happy to hear," writes he, "that General St. Clair and his army are not in the hands of the

enemy. I really feared they had become prisoners. The evacuation of Ticonderoga and Mount Independence is an event of chagrin and surprise not apprehended, nor within the compass of my reasoning. . . . . This stroke is severe indeed, and has distressed us much. But, notwithstanding things at present have a dark and gloomy aspect, I hope a spirited opposition will check the progress of General Burgoyne's army, and that the confidence derived from his success, will hurry him into measures that will in their consequences be favorable to us. *We should never despair. Our situation before has been unpromising and has changed for the better, so I trust it will again. If new difficulties arise, we must only put forth new exertions, and proportion our efforts to the exigency of the times.*"

His spirit of candor and moderation is evinced in another letter. "I will not condemn or even pass censure upon any officer unheard, but I think it a duty which General St. Clair owes to his own character, to insist upon an opportunity of giving his reasons for his sudden evacuation of a post, which, but a few days before, he, by his own letters, thought tenable, at least for a while. People at a distance are apt to form wrong conjectures, and if General St. Clair has good reasons for the step he has taken, I think the sooner he justifies himself the better. I have mentioned these matters, because he may not know that his conduct is looked upon as very unaccountable by all ranks of people in this part of the

country. If he is reprehensible, the public have an undoubted right to call for that justice which is due from an officer, who betrays or gives up his post in an unwarrantable manner."*

Having stated the various measures adopted by Washington for the aid of the Northern army at this critical juncture, we will leave him at his encampment in the Clove, anxiously watching the movements of the fleet and the lower army, while we turn to the north, to explain the mysterious retreat of General St. Clair.

* Letter to Schuyler, 18th July, 1777.

CHAPTER X.

PARTICULARS OF THE EVACUATION.—INDIAN SCOUTS IN THE VICINITY OF THE FORT.—OUTPOSTS ABANDONED BY ST. CLAIR.—BURGOYNE SECURES MOUNT HOPE.—INVESTS THE FORTRESS.—SEIZES AND OCCUPIES SUGAR HILL.—THE FORTS OVERLOOKED AND IN IMMINENT PERIL.—DETERMINATION TO EVACUATE.—PLAN OF RETREAT.—PART OF THE GARRISON DEPART FOR SKENESBOROUGH IN THE FLOTILLA.—ST. CLAIR CROSSES WITH THE REST TO FORT INDEPENDENCE.—A CONFLAGRATION REVEALS HIS RETREAT.—THE BRITISH CAMP AROUSED.—FRASER PURSUES ST. CLAIR.—BURGOYNE WITH HIS SQUADRON MAKES AFTER THE FLOTILLA.—PART OF THE FUGITIVES OVERTAKEN.—FLIGHT OF THE REMAINDER TO FORT ANNE.—SKIRMISH OF COLONEL LONG.—RETREAT TO FORT EDWARD.—ST. CLAIR AT CASTLETON.—ATTACK OF HIS REAR-GUARD.—FALL OF COLONEL FRANCIS.—DESERTION OF COLONEL HALE.—ST. CLAIR REACHES FORT EDWARD.—CONSTERNATION OF THE COUNTRY.—EXULTATION OF THE BRITISH.

IN the accounts given in the preceding chapter of the approach of Burgoyne to Ticonderoga, it was stated that he had encamped four miles north of the fortress, and intrenched himself. On the 2d of July, Indian scouts made their appearance in the vicinity of a blockhouse and some outworks about the strait or channel leading to Lake George. As General St. Clair did not think the garrison sufficient to defend all the outposts, these works with some adjacent saw-mills were set on fire and abandoned. The extreme left of Ticonderoga

was weak, and might easily be turned; a post had therefore been established in the preceding year, nearly half a mile in advance of the old French lines, on an eminence to the north of them. General St. Clair, through singular remissness, had neglected to secure it. Burgoyne soon discovered this neglect, and hastened to detach Generals Phillips and Fraser with a body of infantry and light artillery, to take possession of this post. They did so without opposition. Heavy guns were mounted upon it; Fraser's whole corps was stationed there; the post commanded the communication by land and water with Lake George, so as to cut off all supplies from that quarter. In fact, such were the advantages expected from this post, thus neglected by St. Clair, that the British gave it the significant name of Mount Hope.

The enemy now proceeded gradually to invest Ticonderoga. A line of troops was drawn from the western part of Mount Hope round to Three Mile Point, where General Fraser was posted with the advance guard, while General Riedesel encamped with the German reserve in a parallel line, on the opposite side of Lake Champlain, at the foot of Mount Independence. For two days the enemy occupied themselves in making their advances and securing these positions, regardless of a cannonade kept up by the American batteries.

St. Clair began to apprehend that a regular siege was intended, which would be more difficult to withstand than a direct assault; he kept up a resolute aspect, however,

and went about among his troops, encouraging them with the hope of a successful resistance, but enjoining incessant vigilance, and punctual attendance at the alarm posts at morning and evening roll-call.

With all the pains and expense lavished by the Americans to render these works impregnable, they had strangely neglected the master key by which they were all commanded. This was Sugar Hill, a rugged height, the termination of a mountain ridge which separates Lake Champlain from Lake George. It stood to the south of Ticonderoga, beyond the narrow channel which connected the two lakes, and rose precipitously from the waters of Champlain to the height of six hundred feet. It had been pronounced by the Americans too distant to be dangerous. Colonel Trumbull, some time an aide-de-camp to Washington, and subsequently an adjutant, had proved the contrary in the preceding year, by throwing a shot from a six-pounder in the fort nearly to the summit. It was then pronounced inaccessible to an enemy. This Trumbull had likewise proved to be an error, by clambering with Arnold and Wayne to the top, whence they perceived that a practicable road for artillery might easily and readily be made. Trumbull had insisted that this was the true point for the fort, commanding the neighboring heights, the narrow parts of both lakes, and the communication between. A small, but strong fort here, with twenty-five heavy guns and five hundred men, would be as efficient as one hundred guns and ten thou-

sand men on the extensive works of Ticonderoga.* His suggestions were disregarded; their wisdom was now to be proved.

The British General Phillips, on taking his position, had regarded the hill with a practiced eye. He caused it to be reconnoitered by a skillful engineer. The report was, that it overlooked, and had the entire command of Fort Ticonderoga and Fort Independence, being about fourteen hundred yards from the former, and fifteen hundred from the latter; that the ground could be leveled for cannon, and a road cut up the defiles of the mountain in four-and-twenty hours.

Measures were instantly taken to plant a battery on that height. While the American garrisons were entirely engaged in a different direction, cannonading Mount Hope and the British lines without material effect, and without provoking a reply, the British troops were busy throughout the day and night cutting a road through rocks and trees and up rugged defiles. Guns, ammunition, and stores, all were carried up the hill in the night; the cannon were hauled up from tree to tree, and before morning the ground was leveled for the battery on which they were to be mounted. To this work, thus achieved by a *coup de main*, they gave the name of Fort Defiance.

On the 5th of July, to their astonishment and consta-

* Trumbull's *Autobiography*, p. 32.

nation, the garrison beheld a legion of red-coats on the summit of this hill, constructing works which must soon lay the fortress at their mercy.

In this sudden and appalling emergency, General St. Clair called a council of war. What was to be done? The batteries from this new fort would probably be open the next day: by that time Ticonderoga might be com pletely invested, and the whole garrison exposed to capture. They had not force sufficient for one half the works, and General Schuyler, supposed to be at Albany, could afford them no relief. The danger was imminent; delay might prove fatal. It was unanimously determined to evacuate both Ticonderoga and Mount Independence that very night, and retreat to Skenesborough (now Whitehall), at the upper part of the lake, about thirty miles distant, where there was a stockaded fort. The main body of the army, led by General St. Clair, were to cross to Mount Independence and push for Skenesborough by land, taking a circuitous route through the woods on the east side of the lake, by way of Castleton.

The cannon, stores, and provisions, together with the wounded and the women, were to be embarked on board of two hundred bateaux, and conducted to the upper extremity of the lake, by Colonel Long with six hundred men; two hundred of whom in five armed galleys were to form a rear-guard.

It was now three o'clock in the afternoon; yet all the preparations were to be made for the coming night, and

that with as little bustle and movement as possible; for they were overlooked by Fort Defiance, and their intentions might be suspected. Everything, therefore, was done quietly, but alertly; in the meantime, to amuse the enemy, a cannonade was kept up every half hour toward the new battery on the hill. As soon as the evening closed, and their movements could not be discovered, they began in all haste to load the boats. Such of the cannon as could not be taken were ordered to be spiked. It would not do to knock off their trunnions, lest the noise should awaken suspicions. In the hurry several were left uninjured. The lights in the garrison being previously extinguished, their tents were struck and put on board of the boats, and the women and the sick embarked. Everything was conducted with such silence and address, that, although it was a moonlight night, the flotilla departed undiscovered, and was soon under the shadows of the mountains and overhanging forests.

The retreat by land was not conducted with equal discretion and mystery. General St. Clair had crossed over the bridge to the Vermont side of the lake by three o'clock in the morning, and set forward with his advance through the woods toward Hubbardton; but, before the rear-guard under Colonel Francis got in motion, the house at Port Independence, which had been occupied by the French General de Fermois, was set on fire—by his orders, it is said, though we are loth to charge him with such indiscretion, such gross and wanton violation

of the plan of retreat. The consequences were disastrous. The British sentries at Mount Hope were astonished by a conflagration suddenly lighting up Mount Independence, and revealing the American troops in full retreat; for the rear-guard, disconcerted by this sudden exposure, pressed forward for the woods in the utmost haste and confusion.

The drums beat to arms in the British camp. Alarm guns were fired from Mount Hope: General Fraser dashed into Ticonderoga with his pickets, giving orders for his brigade to arm in all haste and follow. By daybreak he had hoisted the British flag over the deserted fortress; before sunrise he had passed the bridge, and was in full pursuit of the American rear-guard. Burgoyne was roused from his morning slumbers on board of the frigate *Royal George*, by the alarm guns from Fort Hope, and a message from General Fraser, announcing the double retreat of the Americans by land and water. From the quarter-deck of the frigate he soon had confirmation of the news. The British colors were flying on Fort Ticonderoga, and Fraser's troops were glittering on the opposite shore.

Burgoyne's measures were prompt. General Riedesel was ordered to follow and support Fraser with a part of the German troops; garrisons were thrown into Ticonderoga and Mount Independence; the main part of the army was embarked on board of the frigates and gunboats; the floating bridge with its boom and chain, which

had cost months to construct, was broken through by nine o'clock; when Burgoyne set out with his squadron in pursuit of the flotilla.

We left the latter making its retreat on the preceding evening towards Skenesborough. The lake above Ticonderoga becomes so narrow that, in those times, it was frequently called South River. Its beautiful waters wound among mountains covered with primeval forests. The bateaux, deeply laden, made their way slowly in a lengthened line; sometimes under the shadows of the mountains, sometimes in the gleam of moonlight. The rear-guard of armed galleys followed at wary distance. No immediate pursuit, however, was apprehended. The floating bridge was considered an effectual impediment to the enemy's fleet. Gayety, therefore, prevailed among the fugitives. They exulted in the secrecy and dexterity with which they had managed their retreat, and amused themselves with the idea of what would be the astonishment of the enemy at daybreak. The officers regaled merrily on the stores saved from Ticonderoga, and knocking off the necks of bottles of wine, drank a pleasant *reveille* to General Burgoyne.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of the succeeding day, the heavily laden bateaux arrived at Skenesborough. The disembarkation had scarcely commenced when the thundering of artillery was heard from below. Could the enemy be at hand? It was even so. The British gunboats having pushed on in advance of the frigates, had

overtaken and were firing upon the galleys. The latter defended themselves for a while, but at length two struck, and three were blown up. The fugitives from them brought word that the British ships not being able to come up, troops and Indians were landing from them and scrambling up the hills; intending to get in the rear of the fort and cut off all retreat.

All now was consternation and confusion. The bateaux, the storehouses, the fort, the mill were all set on fire, and a general flight took place toward Fort Anne, about twelve miles distant. Some made their way in boats up Wood Creek, a winding stream. The main body, under Colonel Long, retreated by a narrow defile cut through the woods, harassed all night by alarms that the Indians were close in pursuit. Both parties reached Fort Anne by daybreak. It was a small picketed fort, near the junction of Wood Creek and East Creek, about sixteen miles from Fort Edward. General Schuyler arrived at the latter place on the following day. The number of troops with him was inconsiderable, but, hearing of Colonel Long's situation, he immediately sent him a small reinforcement, with provisions and ammunition, and urged him to maintain his post resolutely.

On the same day Colonel Long's scouts brought in word that there were British red-coats approaching. They were in fact a regiment under Lieutenant-colonel Hill, detached from Skenesborough by Burgoyne in pursuit of the fugitives. Long sallied forth to meet them;

posting himself at a rocky defile, where there was a narrow pathway along the border of Wood Creek. As the enemy advanced he opened a heavy fire upon them in front, while a part of his troops crossing and recrossing the creek, and availing themselves of their knowledge of the ground, kept up a shifting attack from the woods in flank and rear. Apprehensive of being surrounded, the British took post upon a high hill to their right, where they were warmly besieged for nearly two hours, and, according to their own account, would certainly have been forced, had not some of their Indian allies arrived and set up the much-dreaded war-whoop. It was answered with three cheers by the British upon the hill. This changed the fortune of the day. The Americans had nearly expended their ammunition, and had not enough left to cope with this new enemy. They retreated, therefore, to Fort Anne, carrying with them a number of prisoners, among whom were a captain and surgeon. Supposing the troops under Colonel Hill an advance guard of Burgoyne's army, they set fire to the fort and pushed on to Fort Edward; where they gave the alarm that the main force of the enemy was close after them, and that no one knew what had become of General St. Clair and the troops who had retreated with him. We shall now clear up the mystery of his movements.

His retreat through the woods from Mount Independence continued the first day until night, when he arrived

at Castleton, thirty miles from Ticonderoga. His rear-guard halted about six miles short, at Hubbardton, to await the arrival of stragglers. It was composed of three regiments under colonels Seth Warner, Francis, and Hale; in all about thirteen hundred men.

Early the next morning, a sultry morning of July, while they were taking their breakfast, they were startled by the report of fire-arms. Their sentries had discharged their muskets, and came running in with word that the enemy were at hand.

It was General Fraser, with his advance of eight hundred and fifty men, who had pressed forward in the latter part of the night, and now attacked the Americans with great spirit, notwithstanding their superiority in numbers; in fact, he expected to be promptly reinforced by Riedesel and his Germans. The Americans met the British with great spirit; but at the very commencement of the action, Colonel Hale, with a detachment placed under his command to protect the rear, gave way, leaving Warner and Francis with but seven hundred men to bear the brunt of the battle. These posted themselves behind logs and trees in "backwoods" style, whence they kept up a destructive fire, and were evidently gaining the advantage, when General Riedesel came pressing into the action with his German troops, drums beating and colors flying. There was now an impetuous charge with the bayonet. Colonel Francis was among the first who fell, gallantly fighting at the head of his men. The

Americans, thinking the whole German force upon them, gave way and fled, leaving the ground covered with their dead and wounded. Many others who had been wounded perished in the woods, where they had taken refuge. Their whole loss in killed, wounded and taken, was upwards of three hundred; that of the enemy one hundred and eighty-three. Several officers were lost on both sides. Among those wounded of the British was Major Ackland of the grenadiers, of whose further fortunes in the war we shall have to speak hereafter.

The noise of the firing when the action commenced had reached General St. Clair at Castleton. He immediately sent orders to two militia regiments which were in his rear, and within two miles of the battle-ground, to hasten to the assistance of his rear-guard. They refused to obey, and hurried forward to Castleton. At this juncture St. Clair received information of Burgoyne's arrival at Skenesborough, and the destruction of the American works there: fearing to be intercepted at Fort Anne, he immediately changed his route, struck into the woods on his left, and directed his march to Rutland, leaving word for Warner to follow him. The latter overtook him two days afterwards, with his shattered force reduced to ninety men. As to Colonel Hale, who had pressed towards Castleton at the beginning of the action, he and his men were overtaken the same day by the enemy, and the whole party captured, without making any fight. It has been alleged in his excuse, with apparent justice,

that he and a large portion of his men were in feeble health, and unfit for action; for his own part, he died while yet a prisoner, and never had the opportunity which he sought, to vindicate himself before a court-martial.

On the 12th St. Clair reached Fort Edward, his troops haggard and exhausted by their long retreat through the woods. Such is the story of the catastrophe at Fort Ticonderoga, which caused so much surprise and concern to Washington, and of the seven days' mysterious disappearance of St. Clair, which kept every one in the most painful suspense.

The loss of artillery, ammunition, provisions, and stores, in consequence of the evacuation of these northern posts, was prodigious; but the worst effect was the consternation spread throughout the country. A panic prevailed at Albany, the people running about as if distracted, sending off their goods and furniture.* The great barriers of the North, it was said, were broken through, and there was nothing to check the triumphant career of the enemy.

The invading army, both officers and men, according to a British writer of the time, "were highly elated with their fortune, and deemed that and their prowess to be irresistible. They regarded their enemy with the greatest contempt, and considered their own toils to be nearly at an end, and Albany already in their hands."

* MS. Letter of Richard Varick to Schuyler.

In England, too, according to the same author, the joy and exultation were extreme; not only at court, but with all those who hoped or wished the unqualified subjugation and unconditional submission of the colonies. "The loss in reputation was greater to the Americans," adds he, "and capable of more fatal consequences, than that of ground, of posts, of artillery, or of men. All the contemptuous and most degrading charges which had been made by their enemies, of their wanting the resolution and abilities of men, even in defense of what was dear to them, were now repeated and believed." . . . . "It was not difficult to diffuse an opinion that the war, in effect, was over, and that any further resistance would render the terms of their submission worse. Such," he concludes, "were some of the immediate effects of the loss of those grand keys of North America, Ticonderoga and the lakes." *

* *Hist. Civil War in America*, vol. i. p. 283.

CHAPTER XI.

CAPTURE OF GENERAL PRESCOTT.—PROFFERED IN EXCHANGE FOR LEE.—REINFORCEMENTS TO SCHUYLER.—ARNOLD SENT TO THE NORTH.—EASTERN MILITIA TO REPAIR TO SARATOGA.—FURTHER REINFORCEMENTS.—GENERALS LINCOLN AND ARNOLD RECOMMENDED FOR PARTICULAR SERVICE.—WASHINGTON'S MEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN.—BRITISH FLEET PUTS TO SEA.—CONJECTURES AS TO ITS DESTINATION.—A FEIGNED LETTER.—APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE OF THE FLEET.—ORDERS AND COUNTER-ORDERS OF WASHINGTON.—ENCAMPS AT GERMANTOWN.—ANXIETY FOR THE SECURITY OF THE HIGHLANDS.—GEORGE CLINTON ON GUARD.—CALL ON CONNECTICUT.

SPIRITED exploit to the eastward was performed during the prevalence of adverse news from the North. General Prescott had command of the British forces in Rhode Island. His harsh treatment of Colonel Ethan Allen, and his haughty and arrogant conduct on various occasions, had rendered him peculiarly odious to the Americans. Lieutenant-colonel Barton, who was stationed with a force of Rhode Island militia on the mainland, received word that Prescott was quartered at a country house near the western shore of the island, about four miles from Newport, totally unconscious of danger, though in a very exposed situation. He determined, if possible, to surprise and capture him.

Forty resolute men joined him in the enterprise. Embarking at night in two boats at Warwick Neck, they pulled quietly across the bay with muffled oars, undiscovered by the ships of war and guard-boats; landed in silence; eluded the vigilance of the guard stationed near the house; captured the sentry at the door, and surprised the general in his bed. His aide-de-camp leaped from the window, but was likewise taken. Colonel Barton returned with equal silence and address, and arrived safe at Warwick with his prisoners. A sword was voted to him by Congress, and he received a colonel's commission in the regular army.

Washington hailed the capture of Prescott as a peculiarly fortunate circumstance, furnishing him with an equivalent for General Lee. He accordingly wrote to Sir William Howe, proposing the exchange. "This proposition," writes he, "being agreeable to the letter and spirit of the agreement subsisting between us, will, I hope, have your approbation. I am the more induced to expect it, as it will not only remove one ground of controversy between us, but in its consequences effect the exchanges of Lieutenant-colonel Campbell and the Hessian officers, for a like number of ours of equal rank in your possession."

No immediate reply was received to this letter, Sir William Howe being at sea; in the meantime Prescott remained in durance. "I would have him genteelly accommodated, but strongly guarded," writes Washington.

"I would not admit him to parole, as General Howe has not thought proper to grant General Lee that indulgence."*

Washington continued his anxious exertions to counteract the operations of the enemy; forwarding artillery and ammunition to Schuyler, with all the camp furniture that could be spared from his own encampment and from Peekskill. A part of Nixon's brigade was all the reinforcement he could afford in his present situation. "To weaken this army more than is prudent," writes he, "would perhaps bring destruction upon it, and I look upon the keeping it upon a respectable footing as the only means of preventing a junction of Howe's and Burgoyne's armies, which, if effected, may have the most fatal consequences."

Schuyler had earnestly desired the assistance of an active officer well acquainted with the country. Washington sent him Arnold. "I need not," writes he, "enlarge upon his well-known activity, conduct, and bravery. The proofs he has given of all these have gained him the confidence of the public and of the army, the Eastern troops in particular."

The question of rank, about which Arnold was so tenacious, was yet unsettled, and though, had his promotion been regular, he would have been superior in command to General St. Clair, he assured Washington that, on the present occasion, his claim should create no dispute.

* Letter to Governor Trumbull. *Correspondence of the Revolution*, vol i. Sparks.

Schuyler, in the meantime, aided by Kosciuszko the Pole, who was engineer in his department, had selected two positions on Moses Creek, four miles below Fort Edward; where the troops which had retreated from Ticonderoga, and part of the militia, were throwing up works.

To impede the advance of the enemy, he had caused trees to be felled into Wood Creek, so as to render it unnavigable, and the roads between Fort Edward and Fort Anne to be broken up; the cattle in that direction to be brought away, and the forage destroyed. He had drawn off the garrison from Fort George, who left the buildings in flames. "Strengthened by that garrison, who are in good health," writes he, "and if the militia, who are here, or an equal number, can be prevailed on to stay, and the enemy give me a few days more, which I think they will be obliged to do, I shall not be apprehensive that they will be able to force the posts I am about to occupy."

Washington cheered on his faithful coadjutor. His reply to Schuyler (July 22d) was full of that confident hope, founded on sagacious forecast, with which he was prone to animate his generals in times of doubt and difficulty. "Though our affairs for some days past have worn a dark and gloomy aspect, I yet look forward to a fortunate and happy change. I trust General Burgoyne's army will meet sooner or later an effectual check, and, as I suggested before, that the success he has had will precipitate his ruin. From your accounts, he appears to be

pursuing that line of conduct, which, of all others, is most favorable to us; I mean acting in detachment. This conduct will certainly give room for enterprise on our part, and expose his parties to great hazard. Could we be so happy as to cut one of them off, supposing it should not exceed four, five, or six hundred men, it would inspirit the people, and do away much of their present anxiety. In such an event they would lose sight of past misfortunes, and, urged at the same time by a regard to their own security, they would fly to arms and afford every aid in their power."

While he thus suggested bold enterprises, he cautioned Schuyler not to repose too much confidence in the works he was projecting, so as to collect in them a large quantity of stores. "I begin to consider lines as a kind of trap," writes he, "and not to answer the valuable purposes expected from them, unless they are in passes which cannot be avoided by the enemy."

In circulars addressed to the brigadier-generals of militia in the western parts of Massachusetts and Connecticut, he warned them that the evacuation of Ticonderoga had opened a door by which the enemy, unless vigorously opposed, might penetrate the northern part of the State of New York, and the western parts of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and, forming a junction with General Howe, cut off the communication between the Eastern and Northern States. "It cannot be supposed," adds he, "that the small number of continental

troops assembled at Fort Edward, is alone sufficient to check the progress of the enemy. To the militia, therefore, must we look for support in this time of trial; and I trust that you will immediately upon receipt of this, if you have not done it already, march with at least one third of the militia under your command, and rendezvous at Saratoga, unless directed to some other place by General Schuyler or General Arnold."

Washington now ordered that all the vessels and river craft, not required at Albany, should be sent down to New Windsor and Fishkill, and kept in readiness; for he knew not how soon the movements of General Howe might render it suddenly necessary to transport part of his forces up the Hudson.

Further letters from Schuyler urged the increasing exigencies of his situation. It was harvest time. The militia, impatient at being detained from their rural labors, were leaving him in great numbers. In a council of general officers, it had been thought advisable to give leave of absence to half, lest the whole should depart. He feared those who remained would do so but a few days. The enemy were steadily employed cutting a road toward him from Skenesborough. From the number of horse they were reported to have, and to expect, they might intend to bring their provisions on horseback. If so, they would be able to move with expedition. In this position of affairs, he urged to be reinforced as speedily as possible.

Washington, in reply, informed him that he had ordered a further reinforcement of General Glover's brigade, which was all he could possibly furnish in his own exigencies. He trusted affairs with Schuyler would soon wear a more smiling aspect, that the Eastern States, who were so deeply concerned in the matter, would exert themselves, by effectual succor, to enable him to check the progress of the enemy, and repel a danger by which they were immediately threatened. From the information he had received, he supposed the force of the enemy to be little more than five thousand. "They seem," said he, "to be unprovided with wagons to transport the immense quantity of baggage and warlike apparatus, without which they cannot pretend to penetrate the country. You mention their having a great number of horses, but they must nevertheless require a considerable number of wagons, as there are many things which cannot be transported on horses. They can never think of advancing without securing their rear, and the force with which they can act against you, will be greatly reduced by detachments necessary for that purpose; and as they have to cut out their passage, and to remove the impediments you have thrown in their way, before they can proceed, this circumstance, with the encumbrance they must feel in their baggage, stores, etc., will inevitably retard their march, and give you leisure and opportunity to prepare a good reception for them. . . . . I have directed General Lincoln to repair to you as speedily as the state

of his health, which is not very perfect, will permit; this gentleman has always supported the character of a judicious, brave, active officer, and he is exceedingly popular in the State of Massachusetts, to which he belongs; he will have a degree of influence over the militia which cannot fail of being highly advantageous. I have intended him more particularly for the command of the militia, and I promise myself it will have a powerful tendency to make them turn out with more cheerfulness, and to inspire them with perseverance to remain in the field, and with fortitude and spirit to do their duty while in it." *

Washington highly approved of a measure suggested by Schuyler, of stationing a body of troops somewhere about the Hampshire Grants (Vermont), so as to be in the rear or on the flank of Burgoyne, should he advance. It would make the latter, he said, very circumspect in his advances, if it did not entirely prevent them. It would keep him in continual anxiety for his rear, and oblige him to leave the posts behind him much stronger than he would otherwise do. He advised that General Lincoln should have the command of the corps thus posted, "as no person could be more proper for it."

He recommended, moreover, that in case the enemy should make any formidable movement in the neighborhood of Fort Schuyler (Stanwix), on the Mohawk River,

* Schuyler's Letter Book.

General Arnold, or some other sensible, spirited officer, should be sent to take charge of that post, keep up the spirits of the inhabitants, and cultivate and improve the favorable disposition of the Indians.

The reader will find in the sequel what a propitious effect all these measures had upon the fortunes of the Northern campaign, and with what admirable foresight Washington calculated all its chances. Due credit must also be given to the sagacious counsels and executive energy of Schuyler; who suggested some of the best moves in the campaign, and carried them vigorously into action. Never was Washington more ably and loyally seconded by any of his generals.

But now the attention of the commander-in-chief is called to the seaboard. On the 23d of July, the fleet, so long the object of watchful solicitude, actually put to sea. The force embarked, according to subsequent accounts, consisted of thirty-six British and Hessian battalions, including the light infantry and grenadiers, with a powerful artillery; a New York corps of provincials, or royalists, called the Queen's Rangers, and a regiment of light horse; between fifteen and eighteen thousand men in all. The force left with General Sir Henry Clinton for the protection of New York, consisted of seventeen battalions, a regiment of light horse, and the remainder of the provincial corps.*

**Civil War in America*, vol. i. p. 250.

The destination of the fleet was still a matter of conjecture. Just after it had sailed, a young man presented himself at one of General Putnam's outposts. He had been a prisoner in New York, he said, but had received his liberty and a large reward on undertaking to be the bearer of a letter from General Howe to Burgoyne. This letter his feelings of patriotism prompted him to deliver up to General Putnam. The letter was immediately transmitted by the general to Washington. It was in the handwriting of Howe, and bore his signature. In it he informed Burgoyne, that instead of any designs up the Hudson, he was bound to the east against Boston. "If," said he, "according to my expectations, we may succeed in getting possession of it, I shall, without loss of time, proceed to coöperate with you in the defeat of the rebel army opposed to you. Clinton is sufficiently strong to amuse Washington and Putnam. I am now making demonstrations to the southward, which I think will have the full effect in carrying our plan into execution."

Washington at once pronounced the letter a feint. "No stronger proof could be given," said he, "that Howe is not going to the eastward. The letter was evidently intended to fall into our hands. If there were not too great a risk of the dispersion of their fleet, I should think their putting to sea a mere manœuver to deceive, and the North River still their object. I am persuaded, more than ever, that Philadelphia is the place of destination."

He now set out with his army for the Delaware, order-

ing Sullivan and Stirling with their divisions to cross the Hudson from Peekskill, and proceed towards Philadelphia. Every movement and order showed his doubt and perplexity, and the circumspection with which he had to proceed. On the 30th, he writes from Coryell's Ferry, about thirty miles from Philadelphia, to General Gates, who was in that city: "As we are yet uncertain as to the real destination of the enemy, though the Delaware seems the most probable, I have thought it prudent to halt the army at this place, Howell's Ferry, and Trenton, at least till the fleet actually enters the bay and puts the matter beyond a doubt. From hence we can be on the proper ground to oppose them before they can possibly make their arrangements and dispositions for an attack. . . . That the post in the Highlands may not be left too much exposed, I have ordered General Sullivan's division to halt at Morristown, whence it will march southward if there should be occasion, or northward upon the first advice that the enemy should be throwing any force up the North River. General Howe's in a manner abandoning General Burgoyne, is so unaccountable a matter, that, till I am fully assured it is so, *I cannot help casting my eyes continually behind me.* As I shall pay no regard to any flying reports of the appearance of the fleet, I shall expect an account of it from you, the moment you have ascertained it to your satisfaction."

On the 31st, he was informed that the enemy's fleet of two hundred and twenty-eight sail had arrived the day

previous at the Capes of Delaware. He instantly wrote to Putnam to hurry on two brigades, which had crossed the river, and to let Schuyler and the commanders in the Eastern States know that they had nothing to fear from Howe, and might bend all their forces, continental and militia, against Burgoyne. In the meantime he moved his camp to Germantown, about six miles from Philadelphia, to be at hand for the defense of that city.

The very next day came word, by express, that the fleet had again sailed out of the Capes, and apparently shaped its course eastward. "This surprising event gives me the greatest anxiety," writes he to Putnam (August 1), "and unless every possible exertion is made, may be productive of the happiest consequences to the enemy and the most injurious to us. . . . . The importance of preventing Mr. Howe's getting possession of the Highlands by a *coup de main*, is infinite to America; and, in the present situation of things, every effort that can be thought of must be used. The probability of his going to the eastward is exceedingly small, and the ill effects that might attend such a step inconsiderable in comparison with those that would inevitably attend a successful stroke on the Highlands."

Under this impression Washington sent orders to Sullivan to hasten back with his division and the two brigades which had recently left Peekskill and to recross the Hudson to that post as speedily as possible, intend-

ing to forward the rest of the army with all the expedition in his power. He wrote, also, to General George Clinton, to reinforce Putnam with as many of the New York militia as could be collected. Clinton, be it observed, had just been installed governor of the State of New York—the first person elevated to that office under the constitution. He still continued in actual command of the militia of the State, and it was with great satisfaction that Washington subsequently learnt he had determined to resume the command of Fort Montgomery in the Highlands: "There cannot be a more proper man," writes he, "on every account."

Washington, moreover, requested Putnam to send an express to Governor Trumbull, urging assistance from the militia of his State without a moment's loss of time. "Connecticut cannot be in more danger through any channel than this, and every motive of its own interest and the general good demands its utmost endeavors to give you effectual assistance. Governor Trumbull will, I trust, be sensible of this."

And here we take occasion to observe, that there could be no surer reliance for aid in time of danger than the patriotism of Governor Trumbull; nor were there men more ready to obey a sudden appeal to arms than the yeomanry of Connecticut; however much their hearts might subsequently yearn toward the farms and firesides they had so promptly abandoned. No portion of the Union was more severely tasked, throughout the Revo-

lution, for military services; and Washington avowed, when the great struggle was over, that, "if all the States had done their duty as well as the little State of Connecticut, the war would have been ended long ago." *

* Communicated by Professor B. Silliman.

CHAPTER XII.

GATES ON THE ALERT FOR A COMMAND.—SCHUYLER UNDERMINED IN CONGRESS.—PUT ON HIS GUARD.—COURTS A SCRUTINY, BUT NOT BEFORE AN EXPECTED ENGAGEMENT.—SUMMONED WITH ST. CLAIR TO HEAD-QUARTERS.—GATES APPOINTED TO THE NORTHERN DEPARTMENT.—WASHINGTON'S SPECULATIONS ON THE SUCCESSES OF BURGOYNE.—ILL-JUDGED MEDDLINGS OF CONGRESS WITH THE COMMISSARIAT.—COLONEL TRUMBULL RESIGNS IN CONSEQUENCE.

WE have cited in a preceding page a letter from Washington to Gates at Philadelphia, requiring his vigilant attention to the movements of the enemy's fleet; that ambitious officer, however, was engrossed at the time by matters more important to his individual interests. The command of the Northern department seemed again within his reach. The evacuation of Ticonderoga had been imputed by many either to cowardice or treachery on the part of General St. Clair, and the enemies of Schuyler had, for some time past, been endeavoring to involve him in the disgrace of the transaction. It is true he was absent from the fortress at the time, zealously engaged, as we have shown, in procuring and forwarding reinforcements and supplies; but it was alleged that the fort had been evacuated by his

order, and that, while there, he had made such dispositions as plainly indicated an intention to deliver it to the enemy. In the eagerness to excite popular feeling against him, old slanders were revived, and the failure of the invasion of Canada, and all the subsequent disasters in that quarter, were again laid to his charge as commanding general of the Northern department. "In short," writes Schuyler in one of his letters, "every art is made use of to destroy that confidence which it is so essential the army should have in its general officers, and this too by people pretending to be friends to the country."*

These charges, which for some time existed merely in popular clamor, had recently been taken up in Congress, and a strong demonstration had been made against him by some of the New England delegates. "Your enemies in this quarter," writes his friend, the Hon. William Duer (July 29th), "are leaving no means unessayed to blast your character, and to impute to your appointment in that department a loss which, rightly investigated, can be imputed to very different causes.

"Be not surprised if you should be desired to attend Congress, to give an account of the loss of Ticonderoga. With respect to the result of the inquiry I am under no apprehensions. Like gold tried in the fire, I trust that you, my dear friend, will be found more pure and bright

* Schuyler to Governor Trumbull. Letter Book.

than ever. . . . . From the nature of your department, and other unavoidable causes, you have not had an opportunity, during the course of this war, of evincing that spirit which *I* and your more intimate friends know you to possess: of this circumstance prejudice takes a cruel advantage, and malice lends an easy ear to her dictates. A hint on this subject is sufficient. You will not, I am sure, see this place till your conduct gives the lie to this insinuation, as it has done before to every other which your enemies have so industriously circulated." *

Schuyler, in reply, expressed the most ardent wish that Congress would order him to attend and give an account of his conduct. He wished his friends to push for the closest scrutiny, confident that it would redound to his honor. "I would not, however, wish the scrutiny to take place immediately," adds he, "as we shall probably soon have an engagement, if we are so reinforced with militia as to give us a probable chance of success. . . . . Be assured, my dear friend, if a general engagement takes place, whatever may be the event, you will not have occasion to blush for your friend." †

It seemed to be the object of Mr. Schuyler's enemies to forestall his having such a chance of distinguishing himself. The business was pushed in Congress more urgently than even Mr. Duer had anticipated. Beside the allegations against him in regard to Ticonderoga, his

* Schuyler's Papers. † Schuyler's Letter Book.

unpopularity in the Eastern States was urged as a sufficient reason for discontinuing him in his present command, as the troops from that quarter were unwilling to serve under him. This had a great effect in the present time of peril, with several of the delegates from the East, who discredited the other charges against him. The consequence was, that after long and ardent debates, in which some of the most eminent delegates from New York, who intimately knew his worth, stood up in his favor, it was resolved (August 1st) that both General Schuyler and General St. Clair should be summoned to head-quarters to account for the misfortunes in the North, and that Washington should be directed to order such general officer as he should think proper to succeed General Schuyler in the command of the Northern department.

The very next day a letter was addressed to Washington by several of the leading Eastern members, men of unquestionable good faith, such as Samuel and John Adams, urging the appointment of Gates. "No man, in our opinion," said they, "will be more likely to restore harmony, order, and discipline, and retrieve our affairs in that quarter. He has, on experience, acquired the confidence and stands high in the esteem of the Eastern troops." Washington excused himself from making any nomination, alleging that the Northern department had, in a great measure, been considered a separate one; that, moreover, the situation of the department was delicate, and might involve interesting and delicate consequences

The nomination, therefore, was made by Congress; the Eastern influence prevailed, and Gates received the appointment, so long the object of his aspirations, if not intrigues.

Washington deeply regretted the removal of a noble-hearted man, with whom he had acted so harmoniously, whose exertions had been so energetic and unwearied, and who was so peculiarly fitted for the varied duties of the department. He consoled himself, however, with the thought that the excuse of want of confidence in the general officers, hitherto alleged by the Eastern States for withholding reinforcements, would be obviated by the presence of this man of their choice.

With the prevalent wisdom of his pen, he endeavored to allay the distrusts and apprehensions awakened by the misfortune at Ticonderoga, which he considered the worst consequence of that event. "If the matter were coolly and dispassionately considered," writes he to the Council of Safety of the State of New York, "there would be nothing found so formidable in General Burgoyne and the force under him, with all his successes, to countenance the least degree of despondency; and experience would show, that even the moderate exertions of the States more immediately interested, would be sufficient to check his career, and, perhaps, convert the advantages he has gained to his ruin. . . . . If I do not give so effectual aid as I could wish to the Northern army, it is not from want of inclination, nor from being too little

impressed with the importance of doing it; but because the state of affairs in this quarter will not possibly admit of it. It would be the height of impolicy to weaken ourselves too much here, in order to increase our strength there; and it must certainly be considered more difficult, as well as of greater moment, to control the main army of the enemy, than an inferior, and, I may say, dependent one; for it is pretty obvious that if General Howe can be kept at bay, and prevented from effecting his purposes, the successes of General Burgoyne, whatever they may be, must be partial and temporary."

The sagacity and foresight of this policy will be manifested by after events.

On the same day on which the above letter was written, he officially announced to Gates his appointment, and desired him to proceed immediately to the place of his destination: wishing him success, and that he "might speedily be able to restore the face of affairs in that quarter."

About this time took effect a measure of Congress, making a complete change in the commissariat. This important and complicated department had hitherto been under the management of one commissary-general, Colonel Joseph Trumbull of Connecticut. By the new arrangement there were to be two commissary-generals, one of purchases, the other of issues; each to be appointed by Congress. They were to have several deputy commissaries under them, but accountable to Congress, and to

be appointed and removed by that body. These, and many subordinate arrangements, had been adopted in opposition to the opinion of Washington, and, most unfortunately, were brought into operation in the midst of this perplexed and critical campaign.

Their first effect was to cause the resignation of Colonel Trumbull, who had been nominated commissary of purchases; and the entrance into office of a number of inexperienced men. The ultimate effect was to paralyze the organization of this vital department; to cause delay and confusion in furnishing and forwarding supplies; and to retard and embarrass the operations of the different armies throughout the year. Washington had many dangers and difficulties to harass and perplex him throughout this complicated campaign, and not among the least may be classed the "stumblings of Congress."

NOTE.

An author, eminent for his historical researches, expresses himself at a loss to explain the prejudice existing against General Schuyler among the people of the New England States. "There was not an individual connected with the Revolution," observes he, "concerning whom there is more abundant evidence of his patriotism and unwearied services in the cause of his country."

Wilkinson, at that time a devoted follower of Gates, and likely to know the influences that operated against his rival, traces this prejudice up to times prior to the Revolution, when Schuyler acted as commissioner on the part of New York in settling the partition line between that colony and Massachusetts Bay. This gave rise to the feuds and controversies concerning the Hampshire Grants, in which, according to Wilkinson, the parties were distinguished by the designations of Yankee and Yorker. The zealous exertions of Schuyler on behalf of New York, gained him the ill

will of the Hampshire grantees, and of eastern men of the first rank with whom he came in collision. This feeling survived the controversy, and existed among the militia from those parts. On the other hand, Wilkinson observes, "It was General Gates' policy to favor the views of the inhabitants of the Hampshire Grants, which made him popular with these people."

Somewhat of the prejudice against Schuyler Wilkinson ascribes to social habits and manners, "those of New England at the time being democratic and puritanical, whilst in New York they were courtly and aristocratical." Schuyler was a man of the world, and of society, cultivated, and well bred; he was an élève too of Major-general Bradstreet in the seven years' war; and had imbibed notions of military carriage and decorum in an aristocratic school; all this rendered him impatient at times of the deficiencies in these respects among the raw militia officers, and made the latter consider him haughty and reserved.

CHAPTER XIII.

WASHINGTON'S PERPLEXITIES ABOUT THE BRITISH FLEET.—PUTNAM AND GOVERNOR CLINTON PUT ON THE ALERT IN THE HIGHLANDS.—MORGAN AND HIS RIFLEMEN SENT TO THE NORTH.—WASHINGTON AT PHILADELPHIA.—HIS FIRST INTERVIEW WITH LAFAYETTE.—INTELLIGENCE ABOUT THE FLEET.—EXPLANATIONS OF ITS MOVEMENTS.—REVIEW OF THE ARMY.—LAFAYETTE MISTAKES THE NATURE OF HIS COMMISSION.—HIS ALLIANCE WITH WASHINGTON.—MARCH OF THE ARMY THROUGH PHILADELPHIA.—ENCAMPMENT AT WILMINGTON.

FOR several days Washington remained at Germantown in painful uncertainty about the British fleet; whether gone to the south or to the east. The intense heat of the weather made him unwilling again to move his army, already excessively harassed by marchings and counter-marchings. Concluding, at length, that the fleet had actually gone to the east, he was once more on the way to recross the Delaware, when an express overtook him on the 10th of August, with tidings that three days before it had been seen off Sinepuxent Inlet, about sixteen leagues south of the Capes of Delaware.

Again he came to a halt, and waited for further intelligence. Danger suggested itself from a different quarter.

Might it not be Howe's plan, by thus appearing with his ships at different places, to lure the army after him, and thereby leave the country open for Sir Henry Clinton with the troops at New York to form a junction with Burgoyne? With this idea Washington wrote forthwith to the veteran Putnam to be on the alert; collect all the force he could to strengthen his post at Peekskill, and send down spies to ascertain whether Sir Henry Clinton was actually at New York, and what troops he had there. "If he has the number of men with him that is reported," observes Washington, "it is probably with the intention to attack you from below, while Burgoyne comes down upon you from above."

The old general, whose boast it was that he never slept but with one eye, was already on the alert. A circumstance had given him proof positive that Sir Henry was in New York, and had roused his military ire. A spy, sent by that commander, had been detected furtively collecting information of the force and condition of the post at Peekskill, and had undergone a military trial. A vessel of war came up the Hudson in all haste, and landed a flag of truce at Verplanck's Point, by which a message was transmitted to Putnam from Sir Henry Clinton, claiming Edmund Palmer as a lieutenant in the British service.

The reply of the old general was brief but emphatic.

"HEAD-QUARTERS, *7th Aug.*, 1777.

"Edmund Palmer, an officer in the enemy's service,

was taken as a spy lurking within our lines; he has been tried as a spy, condemned as a spy, and shall be executed as a spy: and the flag is ordered to depart immediately.

"ISRAEL PUTNAM.

"P. S.—He has, accordingly, been executed."

Governor Clinton, the other guardian of the Highlands, and actually at his post at Fort Montgomery, was equally on the alert. He had faithfully followed Washington's directions, in ordering out militia from different counties to reinforce his own garrison and the army under Schuyler. "I never knew the militia come out with greater alacrity," writes he: "but, as many of them have yet a great part of their harvests in the field, I fear it will be difficult to detain them long, unless the enemy will make some movements that indicate a design of coming this way suddenly, and so obvious as to be believed by the militia."

At the same time, the worthy governor expressed his surprise that the Northern army had not been reinforced from the eastward. "The want of confidence in the general officers to the northward," adds he, "is the specious reason. To me it appears a very weak one. Common gratitude to a sister State, as well as duty to the continent at large, conspire in calling on our eastern neighbors to step forth on this occasion."

One measure more was taken by Washington, during

this interval, in aid of the northern department. The Indians who accompanied Burgoyne were objects of great dread to the American troops, especially the militia. As a counterpoise to them, he now sent up Colonel Morgan with five hundred riflemen to fight them in their own way. "They are all chosen men," said he, "selected from the army at large, and well acquainted with the use of rifles and with that mode of fighting. I expect the most eminent services from them, and I shall be mistaken if their presence does not go far towards producing a general desertion among the savages." It was, indeed, an arm of strength, which he could but ill spare from his own army.

Putnam was directed to have sloops ready to transport them up the Hudson, and Gates was informed of their being on the way, and about what time he might expect them, as well as two regiments from Peekskill, under Colonels Van Courtlandt and Livingston.

"With these reinforcements, besides the militia under General Lincoln," writes Washington to Gates, "I am in hopes you will find yourself at least equal to stop the progress of Mr. Burgoyne, and, by cutting off his supplies of provisions, to render his situation very ineligible." Washington was thus, in a manner, carrying on two games at once, with Howe on the seaboard and with Burgoyne on the upper waters of the Hudson, and endeavoring by skillful movements to give check to both. It was an arduous and complicated task, especially with

his scanty and fluctuating means, and the wide extent of country and great distances over which he had to move his men.

His measures to throw a force in the rear of Burgoyne were now in a fair way of being carried into effect. Lincoln was at Bennington. Stark had joined him with a body of New Hampshire militia, and a corps of Massachusetts militia was arriving. "Such a force in his rear," observed Washington, "will oblige Burgoyne to leave such strong posts behind as must make his main body very weak, and extremely capable of being repulsed by the force we have in front."

During his encampment in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, Washington was repeatedly at that city, making himself acquainted with the military capabilities of the place and its surrounding country, and directing the construction of fortifications on the river. In one of these visits he became acquainted with the young Marquis de Lafayette, who had recently arrived from France, in company with a number of French, Polish, and German officers, among whom was the Baron de Kalb. The marquis was not quite twenty years of age, yet had already been married nearly three years to a lady of rank and fortune. Full of the romance of liberty, he had torn himself from his youthful bride, turned his back upon the gayeties and splendors of a court, and in defiance of impediments and difficulties multiplied in his path, had made his way to America to join its hazardous fortunes.

He sent in his letters of recommendation to Mr. Lovell, Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs; and applied the next day at the door of Congress to know his success. Mr. Lovell came forth, and gave him but little encouragement; Congress, in fact, was embarrassed by the number of foreign applications, many without merit. Lafayette immediately sent in the following note: "After my sacrifices, I have the right to ask two favors; one is to serve at my own expense; the other, to commence by serving as a volunteer." *

This simple appeal had its effect: it called attention to his peculiar case, and Congress resolved on the 31st of July, that in consideration of his zeal, his illustrious family and connections, he should have the rank of major-general in the army of the United States.

It was at a public dinner, where a number of members of Congress were present, that Lafayette first saw Washington. He immediately knew him, he said, from the officers who surrounded him, by his commanding air and person. When the party was breaking up, Washington took him aside, complimented him in a gracious manner on his disinterested zeal and the generosity of his conduct, and invited him to make head-quarters his home. "I cannot promise you the luxuries of a court," said he, "but as you have become an American soldier, you will, doubtless, accommodate yourself to the fare of an American army."

* *Memoires du Gen. Lafayette*, tom. i. p. 19.

Many days had now elapsed without further tidings of the fleet. What had become of it? Had Howe gone against Charleston? If so, the distance was too great to think of following him. Before the army, debilitated and wasted by a long march, under a summer sun, in an unhealthy climate, could reach there, he might accomplish every purpose he had in view, and reëmbark his troops to turn his arms against Philadelphia, or any other point, without the army being at hand to oppose him.

What, under these uncertainties, was to be done? Remain inactive, in the remote probability of Howe's returning this way; or proceed to the Hudson with a view either to oppose Burgoyne, or make an attempt upon New York? A successful stroke with respect to either, might make up for any losses sustained in the South. The latter was unanimously determined in a council of war, in which the Marquis Lafayette took part. As it was, however, a movement that might involve the most important consequences, Washington sent his aide-de-camp, Colonel Alexander Hamilton, with a letter to the President of Congress, requesting the opinion of that body. Congress approved the decision of the council, and the army was about to be put in march, when all these tormenting uncertainties were brought to an end by intelligence that the fleet had actually entered the Chesapeake, and anchored at Swan Point, at least two hundred miles within the capes. "By General Howe's

coming so far up the Chesapeake," writes Washington, "he must mean to reach Philadelphia by that route, though to be sure it is a strange one."

The mystery of these various appearances and vanishings, which had caused so much wonder and perplexity, is easily explained. Shortly before putting to sea with the ships of war, Howe had sent a number of transports, and a ship cut down as a floating battery, up the Hudson, which had induced Washington to despatch troops to the Highlands. After putting to sea, the fleet was a week in reaching the Capes of Delaware. When there, the commanders were deterred from entering the river by reports of measures taken to obstruct its navigation. It was then determined to make for Chesapeake Bay, and approach, in that way, as near as possible to Philadelphia. Contrary winds, however, kept them for a long time from getting into the bay.

Lafayette, in his memoirs, describes a review of Washington's army which he witnessed about this time. "Eleven thousand men, but tolerably armed, and still worse clad, presented," he said, "a singular spectacle; in this parti-colored and often naked state, the best dresses were hunting shirts of brown linen. Their tactics were equally irregular. They were arranged without regard to size, excepting that the smallest men were the front rank; with all this, there were good-looking soldiers conducted by zealous officers."

"We ought to feel embarrassed," said Washington to

him, "in presenting ourselves before an officer just from the French army."

"It is to learn, and not to instruct, that I come here," was Lafayette's apt and modest reply; and it gained him immediate popularity.

The marquis, however, had misconceived the nature of his appointment; his commission was merely honorary, but he had supposed it given with a view to the command of a division of the army. This misconception on his part caused Washington some embarrassment. The marquis, with his characteristic vivacity and ardor, was eager for immediate employ. He admitted that he was young and inexperienced, but always accompanied the admission with the assurance that, so soon as Washington should think him fit for the command of a division, he would be ready to enter upon the duties of it, and, in the meantime, offered his services for a smaller command. "What the designs of Congress respecting this gentleman are, and what line of conduct I am to pursue to comply with their design and his expectations," writes Washington, "I know not, and beg to be instructed."

"The numberless applications for employment by foreigners under their respective appointments," continues he, "add no small embarrassment to a command, which, without it, is abundantly perplexed by the different tempers I have to do with, and the different modes which the respective States have pursued in nominating and arranging their officers; *the combination of all is but too just*

a representation of a great chaos, from whence we are endeavoring, how successfully time only can show, to draw some regularity and order."* How truly is here depicted one of the great difficulties of his command, continually tasking his equity and equanimity. In the present instance it was intimated to Washington, that he was not bound by the tenor of Lafayette's commission to give him a command; but was at liberty to follow his own judgment in the matter. This still left him in a delicate situation, with respect to the marquis, whose prepossessing manners and self-sacrificing zeal inspired regard; but whose extreme youth and inexperience necessitated caution. Lafayette, however, from the first attached himself to Washington with an affectionate reverence, the sincerity of which could not be mistaken, and soon won his way into a heart, which, with all its apparent coldness, was naturally confiding, and required sympathy and friendship; and it is a picture well worthy to be hung up in history,—this cordial and enduring alliance of the calm, dignified, sedate Washington, mature in years and wisdom, and the young, buoyant, enthusiastic Lafayette.

The several divisions of the army had been summoned to the immediate neighborhood of Philadelphia, and the militia of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the northern parts of Virginia were called out. Many of the militia, with Colonel Proctor's corps of artillery, had been or-

* Washington to Benjamin Harrison. Sparks, v. 35.

dered to rendezvous at Chester on the Delaware, about twelve miles below Philadelphia; and, by Washington's orders, General Wayne left his brigade under the next in command, and repaired to Chester, to arrange the troops assembling there.

As there had been much disaffection to the cause evinced in Philadelphia, Washington, in order to encourage its friends and dishearten its enemies, marched with the whole army through the city, down Front and up Chestnut Street. Great pains were taken to make the display as imposing as possible. All were charged to keep to their ranks, carry their arms well, and step in time to the music of the drums and fifes, collected in the centre of each brigade. "Though indifferently dressed," says a spectator, "they held well-burnished arms, and carried them like soldiers, and looked, in short, as if they might have faced an equal number with a reasonable prospect of success." To give them something of a uniform appearance, they had sprigs of green in their hats.

Washington rode at the head of the troops attended by his numerous staff, with the Marquis Lafayette by his side. The long column of the army, broken into divisions and brigades, the pioneers with their axes, the squadrons of horse, the extended trains of artillery, the tramp of steed, the bray of trumpet, and the spirit-stirring sound of drum and fife, all had an imposing effect on a peaceful city unused to the sight of marshaled ar-

mies. The disaffected, who had been taught to believe the American forces much less than they were in reality, were astonished as they gazed on the lengthening procession of a host, which, to their unpracticed eyes, appeared innumerable; while the whigs, gaining fresh hope and animation from the sight, cheered the patriot squadrons as they passed.

Having marched through Philadelphia, the army continued on to Wilmington, at the confluence of Christiana Creek and the Brandywine, where Washington set up his head-quarters, his troops being encamped on the neighboring heights.

We will now revert to the other object of Washington's care and solicitude, the invading army of Burgoyne in the north; and will see how far his precautionary measures were effective.

CHAPTER XIV.

BURGOYNE AT SKENESBOROUGH.—PREPARES TO MOVE TOWARDS THE HUDSON.—MAJOR SKENE THE ROYALIST.—SLOW MARCH TO FORT ANNE.—SCHUYLER AT FORT MILLER.—PAINTED WARRIORS.—LANGLADE.—ST. LUC.—HONOR OF THE TOMAHAWK.—TRAGICAL HISTORY OF MISS McCREA.—ITS RESULTS.—BURGOYNE ADVANCES TO FORT EDWARD.—SCHUYLER AT STILLWATER.—JOINED BY LINCOLN.—BURGOYNE DESERTED BY HIS INDIAN ALLIES.

IN a preceding chapter we left Burgoyne, early in July, at Skenesborough, of which he had just gained possession. He remained there nearly three weeks, awaiting the arrival of the residue of his troops, with tents, baggage and provisions, and preparing for his grand move toward the Hudson River. Many royalists flocked to his standard. One of the most important was Major Skene, from whom the place was named, being its founder, and the owner of much land in its neighborhood. He had served in the French War, but retired on half pay; bought "soldiers' grants" of land lying within this township, at a trifling price, had their titles secured by royal patent, and thus made a fortune. Burgoyne considered him a valuable adjunct and counselor, and frequently took advice from him in his campaign through this part of the country.

The progress of the army towards the Hudson was slow and difficult, in consequence of the impediments which Schuyler had multiplied in his way during his long halt at Skenesborough. Bridges broken down had to be rebuilt; great trees to be removed which had been felled across the roads and into Wood Creek, which stream was completely choked. It was not until the latter part of July that Burgoyne reached Fort Anne. At his approach, General Schuyler retired from Fort Edward and took post at Fort Miller, a few miles lower down the Hudson.

The Indian allies who had hitherto accompanied the British army had been more troublesome than useful. Neither Burgoyne nor his officers understood their language, but were obliged to communicate with them through Canadian interpreters; too often designing knaves, who played false to both parties. The Indians, too, were of the tribes of Lower Canada, corrupted and debased by intercourse with white men. It had been found difficult to draw them from the plunder of Ticonderoga, or to restrain their murderous propensities.

A party had recently arrived of a different stamp. Braves of the Ottawa and other tribes from the upper country; painted and decorated with savage magnificence, and bearing trophies of former triumphs. They were, in fact, according to Burgoyne, the very Indians who had aided the French in the defeat of Braddock, and were under the conduct of two French leaders; one, named Langlade, had command of them on that very occasion;

the other, named St. Luc, is described by Burgoyne as a Canadian gentleman of honor and abilities, and one of the best partisans of the French in the war of 1756.

Burgoyne trusted to his newly arrived Indians to give a check to the operations of Schuyler, knowing the terror they inspired throughout the country. He thought also to employ them in a wild foray to the Connecticut River, to force a supply of provisions, intercept reinforcements to the American army, and confirm the jealousy which he had, in many ways, endeavored to excite in the New England provinces. He was naturally a humane man, and disliked Indian allies, but these had hitherto served in company with civilized troops, and he trusted to the influence possessed over them by St. Luc and Langlade, to keep them within the usages of war. A circumstance occurred, however, which showed how little the "wild honor" of these warriors of the tomahawk was to be depended upon.

In General Fraser's division was a young officer, Lieutenant David Jones, an American loyalist. His family had their home in the vicinity of Fort Edward before the Revolution. A mutual attachment had taken place between the youth and a beautiful girl, Jane McCrea. She was the daughter of a Scotch Presbyterian clergyman of the Jerseys, some time deceased, and resided with her brother on the banks of the Hudson, a few miles below Fort Edward. The lovers were engaged to be married, when the breaking out of the war severed families and

disturbed all the relations of life. The Joneses were royalists; the brother of Miss McCrea was a stanch whig. The former removed to Canada, where David Jones was among the most respectable of those who joined the royal standard, and received a lieutenant's commission.

The attachment between the lovers continued, and it is probable that a correspondence was kept up between them. Lieutenant Jones was now in Fraser's camp; in his old neighborhood. Miss McCrea was on a visit to a widow lady, Mrs. O'Niel, residing at Fort Edward. The approach of Burgoyne's army had spread an alarm through the country; the inhabitants were flying from their homes. The brother of Miss McCrea determined to remove to Albany, and sent for his sister to return home and make ready to accompany him. She hesitated to obey. He sent a more urgent message, representing the danger of lingering near the fort, which must inevitably fall into the hands of the enemy. Still she lingered. The lady with whom she was a guest was a royalist, a friend of General Fraser; her roof would be respected. Even should Fort Edward be captured, what had Jane to fear? Her lover was in the British camp; the capture of the fort would reunite them.

Her brother's messages now became peremptory. She prepared, reluctantly, to obey, and was to embark in a large bateau which was to convey several families down the river. The very morning when the embarkation was

to take place, the neighborhood was a scene of terror. A marauding party of Indians, sent out by Burgoyne to annoy General Schuyler, were harassing the country. Several of them burst into the house of Mrs. O'Niel, sacked and plundered it, and carried off her and Miss McCrea prisoners. In her fright the latter promised the savages a large reward, if they would spare her life and take her in safety to the British camp. It was a fatal promise. Halting at a spring, a quarrel arose among the savages, inflamed most probably with drink, as to whose prize she was, and who was entitled to the reward. The dispute became furious, and one, in a paroxysm of rage, killed her on the spot. He completed the savage act by bearing off her scalp as a trophy.

General Burgoyne was struck with horror when he heard of this bloody deed. What at first heightened the atrocity was a report that the Indians had been sent by Lieutenant Jones to bring Miss McCrea to the camp. This he positively denied, and his denial was believed. Burgoyne summoned a council of the Indian chiefs, in which he insisted that the murderer of Miss McCrea should be given up to receive the reward of his crime. The demand produced a violent agitation. The culprit was a great warrior, a chief, and the "wild honor" of his brother sachems was roused in his behalf. St. Luc took Burgoyne aside, and entreated him not to push the matter to extremities; assuring him that, from what was passing among the chiefs, he was sure they and their

warriors would all abandon the army, should the delinquent be executed. The British officers also interfered, representing the danger that might accrue should the Indians return through Canada, with their savage resentments awakened, or, what was worse, should they go over to the Americans.

Burgoyne was thus reluctantly brought to spare the offender, but thenceforth made it a rule that no party of Indians should be permitted to go forth on a foray unless under the conduct of a British officer, or some other competent person, who should be responsible for their behavior.

The mischief to the British cause, however, had been effected. The murder of Miss McCrea resounded throughout the land, counteracting all the benefit anticipated from the terror of Indian hostilities. Those people of the frontiers, who had hitherto remained quiet, now flew to arms to defend their families and firesides. In their exasperation they looked beyond the savages to their employers. They abhorred an army, which, professing to be civilized, could league itself with such barbarians; and they execrated a government which, pretending to reclaim them as subjects, could let loose such fiends to desolate their homes.

The blood of this unfortunate girl, therefore, was not shed in vain. Armies sprang up from it. Her name passed as a note of alarm, along the banks of the Hudson; it was a rallying word among the Green Moun-

tains of Vermont, and brought down all their hardy yeomanry.*

As Burgoyne advanced to Fort Edward, Schuyler fell still further back, and took post at Saratoga, or rather Stillwater, about thirty miles from Albany. He had been joined by Major-general Lincoln, who, according to Washington's directions, had hastened to his assistance. In pursuance of Washington's plans, Lincoln proceeded to Manchester in Vermont, to take command of the militia forces collecting at that point. His presence inspired new confidence in the country people, who were abandoning their homes, leaving their crops ungathered, and taking refuge with their families in the lower towns. He found about five hundred militia assembled at Manchester, under Colonel Seth Warner; others were coming on from New Hampshire and Massachusetts, to protect their uncovered frontier. His letters, dated the

* The sad story of Miss McCrea, like many other incidents of the Revolution, has been related in such a variety of ways, and so wrought up by tradition, that it is difficult now to get at the simple truth. Some of the above circumstances were derived from a niece of Miss McCrea, whom the author met upwards of fifty years since, at her residence on the banks of the St. Lawrence. A stone, with her name cut on it, still marks the grave of Miss McCrea near the ruins of Fort Edward; and a tree is pointed out near which she was murdered. Lieutenant Jones is said to have been completely broken in spirit by the shock of her death. Procuring her scalp, with its long silken tresses, he brooded over it in anguish, and preserved it as a sad, but precious relic. Disgusted with the service, he threw up his commission, and retired to Canada; never marrying, but living to be an old man; taciturn and melancholy, and haunted by painful recollections.

4th of August, expressed the expectation of being, in a few days, at the head of at least two thousand men. With these, according to Washington's plan, he was to hang on the flank and rear of Burgoyne's army, cramp its movements, and watch for an opportunity to strike a blow.

Burgoyne was now at Fort Edward. "The enthusiasm of the army, as well as of the general, upon their arrival on the Hudson River, which had been so long the object of their hopes and wishes, may be better conceived than described," says a British writer of the day. The enthusiasm of the general was soon checked, however, by symptoms of ill-humor among his Indian allies. They resented his conduct in regard to the affair of Miss McCrea, and were impatient under the restraint to which they were subjected. He suspected the Canadian interpreters of fomenting this discontent, they being accustomed to profit by the rapine of the Indians. At the earnest request of St. Luc, in whom he still had confidence, he called a council of the chiefs; when, to his astonishment, the tribe for whom that gentleman acted as interpreter, declared their intention of returning home, and demanded his concurrence and assistance.

Burgoyne was greatly embarrassed. Should he acquiesce, it would be to relinquish the aid of a force obtained at an immense expense, esteemed in England of great importance, and which really was serviceable in furnishing scouts and outposts; yet he saw that a cordial recon-

ciliation with them could only be effected by revoking his prohibitions, and indulging their propensities to blood and rapine.

To his credit be it recorded, he adhered to what was right, and rejected what might be deemed expedient. He refused their proposition, and persisted in the restraints he had imposed upon them, but appealed to the wild honor, of which he yet considered them capable, by urging the ties of faith, of generosity, of everything that has an influence with civilized man. His speech appeared to have a good effect. Some of the remote tribes made zealous professions of loyalty and adhesion. Others, of Lower Canada, only asked furloughs for parties to return home and gather in their harvests. These were readily granted, and perfect harmony seemed restored. The next day, however, the chivalry of the wilderness deserted by scores, laden with such spoil as they had collected in their maraudings. These desertions continued from day to day, until there remained in the camp scarce a vestige of the savage warriors that had joined the army at Skenesborough.

CHAPTER XV.

DIFFICULTIES OF BURGOYNE. — PLANS AN EXPEDITION TO BENNINGTON. — ST. LEGER BEFORE FORT STANWIX. — GENERAL HERKIMER AT ORISKANY. — HIGH WORDS WITH HIS OFFICERS. — A DOGGED MARCH. — AN AMBUSCADE. — BATTLE OF ORISKANY. — JOHNSON'S GREENS. — DEATH OF HERKIMER. — SPIRITED SORTIE OF COLONEL WILLETT. — SIR JOHN JOHNSON DRIVEN TO THE RIVER. — FLIGHT OF THE INDIANS. — SACKING OF SIR JOHN'S CAMP. — COLONEL GANSEVOORT MAINTAINS HIS POST. — COLONEL WILLETT SENT IN QUEST OF AID. — ARRIVES AT SCHUYLER'S CAMP.

NEW difficulties beset Burgoyne at Fort Edward. The horses which had been contracted for in Canada, for draft, burden, and saddle, arrived slowly and scantily; having to come a long distance through the wilderness. Artillery and munitions, too, of all kinds, had to be brought from Ticonderoga by the way of Lake George. These, with a vast number of boats for freight, or to form bridges, it was necessary to transport over the carrying-places between the lakes; and by land from Fort George to Fort Edward. Unfortunately, the army had not the requisite supply of horses and oxen. So far from being able to bring forward provisions for a march, it was with difficulty enough could be furnished to feed the army from day to day.

While thus situated, Burgoyne received intelligence that the part of his army which he had detached from Canada under Colonel St. Leger, to proceed by Lake Ontario and Oswego and make a diversion on the Mohawk, had penetrated to that river, and were actually investing Fort Stanwix, the stronghold of that part of the country.

To carry out the original plan of his campaign, it now behooved him to make a rapid move down the Hudson, so as to be at hand to coöperate with St. Leger on his approach to Albany. But how was he to do this, deficient as he was in horses and vehicles for transportation? In this dilemma Colonel (late major) Skene, the royalist of Skenesborough, to whom, from his knowledge of all this region, he had of late resorted for counsel, informed him that at Bennington, about twenty-four miles east of the Hudson, the Americans had a great depot of horses, carriages, and supplies of all kinds, intended for their Northern army. This place, he added, might easily be surprised, being guarded by only a small militia force.

An expedition was immediately set on foot, not only to surprise this place, but to scour the country from Rockingham to Otter Creek; go down the Connecticut as far as Brattleborough, and return by the great road to Albany, there to meet Burgoyne. They were to make prisoners of all officers, civil and military, whom they might meet, acting under Congress; to tax the towns where they halted with everything they stood in need

of, and bring off all horses fit for the dragoons, or for battalion service, with as many saddles and bridles as could be found.

They were everywhere to give out that this was the vanguard of the British army, which would soon follow on its way to Boston, and would soon be joined by the army from Rhode Island. Before relating the events of this expedition, we will turn to notice those of the detachment under St. Leger, with which it was intended to coöperate, and which was investing Fort Schuyler.

This fort, built in 1756, on the site of an old French fortification, and formerly called Fort Stanwix, from a British general of that name, was situated on the right bank of the Mohawk River, at the head of its navigation, and commanding the carrying-place between it and Wood Creek, whence the boats passed to the Oneida Lake, the Oswego River, and Lake Ontario. It was thus a key to the intercourse between Upper Canada and the valley of the Mohawk. The fort was square, with four bastions, and was originally a place of strength; having bomb-proof magazines, a deep moat and draw-bridge, a sally-port, and covered way. In the long interval of peace subsequent to the French war, it had fallen to decay. Recently it had been repaired by order of General Schuyler, and had received his name. It was garrisoned by seven hundred and fifty continental troops from New York and Massachusetts, and was under the command of Colonel Gansevoort of the New York line, a stout-

hearted officer of Dutch descent, who had served under General Montgomery in Canada.

It was a motley force which appeared before it; British, Hessian, Royalist, Canadian, and Indian, about seventeen hundred in all. Among them were St. Leger's rangers and Sir John Johnson's royalist corps, called his greens. Many of the latter had followed Sir John into Canada from the valley of the Mohawk, and were now returned to bring the horrors of war among their former neighbors. The Indians, their worthy allies, were led by the famous Brant.

On the 3d of August, St. Leger sent in a flag with a summons to surrender; accompanied by a proclamation in style and spirit similar to that recently issued by Burgoyne, and intended to operate on the garrison. Both his summons and his proclamation were disregarded. He now set his troops to work to fortify his camp and clear obstructions from Wood Creek and the roads, for the transportation of artillery and provisions, and sent out scouting parties of Indians in all directions, to cut off all communication of the garrison with the surrounding country. A few shells were thrown into the fort. The chief annoyance of the garrison was from the Indians firing with their rifles from behind trees on those busied in repairing the parapets. At night they seemed completely to surround the fort, filling the woods with their yells and howlings.

On the 6th of August, three men made their way into

the fort through a swamp, which the enemy had deemed impassable. They brought the cheering intelligence that General Herkimer, the veteran commander of the militia of Tryon County, was at Oriskany, about eight miles distant, with upwards of eight hundred men. The people of that county were many of them of German origin; some of them Germans by birth. Herkimer was among the former; a large and powerful man, about sixty-five years of age. He requested Colonel Gansevoort, through his three messengers, to fire three signal-guns on receiving word of his vicinage; upon hearing which, he would endeavor to force his way to the fort, depending upon the coöperation of the garrison.

The messengers had been despatched by Herkimer on the evening of the 5th, and he had calculated that they would reach the fort at a very early hour in the morning. Through some delay, they did not reach it until between ten and eleven o'clock. Gansevoort instantly complied with the message. Three signal-guns were fired, and Colonel Willett, of the New York Continentals, with two hundred and fifty men and an iron three-pounder, was detached to make a diversion, by attacking that part of the enemy's camp occupied by Johnson and his royalists.

The delay of the messengers in the night, however, disconcerted the plan of Herkimer. He marshaled his troops by daybreak and waited for the signal-guns. Hour after hour elapsed, but no gun was heard. His officers became impatient of delay, and urged an imme-

diate march. Herkimer represented that they were too weak to force their way to the fort without reinforcements, or without being sure of coöperation from the garrison, and was still for awaiting the preconcerted signals. High words ensued between him and two of his officers. He had a brother and other relatives among the enemy, and hence there were some doubts of his fidelity, though they subsequently proved to be unmerited. Colonels Cox and Paris were particularly urgent for an advance, and suspicious of the motives for holding back. Paris was a prominent man in Tryon County, and member of the Committee of Safety, and in compliance with the wishes of that committee, accompanied Herkimer as his volunteer aide. Losing his temper in the dispute, he accused the latter of being either a tory or a coward. "No," replied the brave old man, "I feel toward you all as a father, and will not lead you into a scrape from which I cannot extricate you." His discretion, however, was overpowered by repeated taunts, and he at length, about nine o'clock, gave the word to march; intimating, however, that those who were the most eager to advance, would be the first to run away.

The march was rather dogged and irregular. There was ill-humor between the general and his officers. Colonels Paris and Cox advised him to throw out a reconnoitering party in the advance, but he disregarded their advice, and perhaps in very opposition to it, neglected so necessary a precaution. About ten o'clock they

came to a place where the road was carried on a causeway of logs across a deep marshy ravine, between high level banks. The main division descended into the ravine, followed by the baggage-wagons. They had scarcely crossed it, when enemies suddenly sprang up in front and on either side, with deadly volleys of musketry, and deafening yells and war-whoops. In fact, St. Leger, apprised by his scouts of their intended approach, had sent a force to waylay them. This was composed of a division of Johnson's greens, led by his brother-in-law, Major Watts; a company of rangers under Colonel Butler, a refugee from this neighborhood, and a strong body of Indians under Brant. The troops were stationed in front just beyond the ravine, the Indians along each side of the road. The plan of the ambuscade was to let the van of the Americans pass the ravine and advance between the concealed parties, when the attack was to be commenced by the troops in front, after which, the Indians were to fall on the Americans in rear and cut off all retreat.

The savages, however, could not restrain their natural ferocity and hold back as ordered, but discharged their rifles simultaneously with the troops, and instantly rushed forward with spears and tomahawks, yelling like demons, and commencing a dreadful butchery. The rear-guard, which had not entered the ravine, retreated. The main body, though thrown into confusion, defended themselves bravely. One of those severe conflicts en-

sued, common in Indian warfare, where the combatants take post with their rifles, behind rock and tree, or come to deadly struggle with knife and tomahawk.

The veteran Herkimer was wounded early in the action. A musket ball shattered his leg just below the knee, killing his horse at the same time. He made his men place him on his saddle at the foot of a large beech tree, against the trunk of which he leaned, continuing to give his orders.

The regulars attempted to charge with the bayonet; but the Americans formed themselves in circles back to back, and repelled them. A heavy storm of thunder and rain caused a temporary lull to the fight, during which the patriots changed their ground. Some of them stationed themselves in pairs behind trees; so that when one had fired the other could cover him until he had reloaded; for the savages were apt to rush up with knife and tomahawk the moment a man had discharged his piece. Johnson's greens came up to sustain the Indians, who were giving way, and now was the fiercest part of the fight. Old neighbors met in deadly feud; former intimacy gave bitterness to present hate, and war was literally carried to the knife; for the bodies of combatants were afterwards found on the field of battle, grappled in death, with the hand still grasping the knife plunged in a neighbor's heart. The very savages seemed inspired with unusual ferocity by the confusion and death struggle around them, and the sight of their prime war-

riors and favorite chiefs shot down. In their blind fury they attacked the white men indiscriminately, friend or foe, so that in this chance-medley fight many of Sir John's greens were slain by his own Indian allies.

A confusion reigns over the accounts of this fight, in which every one saw little but what occurred in his immediate vicinity. The Indians, at length, having lost many of their bravest warriors, gave the retreating cry, "Oonah! Oonah!" and fled to the woods. The greens and rangers, hearing a firing in the direction of the fort, feared an attack upon their camp, and hastened to its defense, carrying off with them many prisoners. The Americans did not pursue them, but placing their wounded on litters made of branches of trees, returned to Oriskany. Both parties have claimed the victory; but it does not appear that either was entitled to it. The dead of both parties lay for days unburied on the field of action, and a wounded officer of the enemy (Major Watts) lay there two days unrelieved, until found by an Indian scout. It would seem as if each party gladly abandoned this scene of one of the most savage conflicts of the Revolution. The Americans had two hundred killed, and a number wounded. Several of these were officers. The loss of the enemy is thought to have been equally great as to numbers; but then the difference in value between regulars and militia! the former often the refuse of mankind, mere hirelings, whereas among the privates of the militia, called out from their homes to defend their neighborhood, were

many of the worthiest and most valuable of the yeomanry. The premature haste of the Indians in attacking, had saved the Americans from being completely sur rounded. The rear-guard, not having entered the defile, turned and made a rapid retreat, but were pursued by the Indians, and suffered greatly in a running fight. We may add that those who had been most urgent with General Herkimer for this movement, were among the first to suffer from it. Colonel Cox was shot down at the first fire, so was a son of Colonel Paris; the colonel himself was taken prisoner, and fell beneath the tomahawk of the famous Red Jacket.

As to General Herkimer, he was conveyed to his residence on the Mohawk River, and died nine days after the battle, not so much from his wound as from bad surgery; sinking gradually through loss of blood from an unskillful amputation. He died like a philosopher and a Christian, smoking his pipe and reading his Bible to the last. His name has been given to a county in that part of the State.*

The sortie of Colonel Willett had been spirited and successful. He attacked the encampments of Sir John Johnson and the Indians, which were contiguous, and strong detachments of which were absent on the ambuscade. Sir John and his men were driven to the river, and the Indians fled to the woods. Willett sacked their

* Some of the particulars of this action were given to the author by a son of Colonel Paris.

camps; loaded wagons with camp equipage, clothing, blankets, and stores of all kinds, seized the baggage and papers of Sir John and of several of his officers, and retreated safely to the fort, just as St. Leger was coming up with a powerful reinforcement. Five colors, which he had brought away with him as trophies, were displayed under the flag of the fort, while his men gave three cheers from the ramparts.

St. Leger now endeavored to operate on the fears of the garrison. His prisoners, it is said, were compelled to write a letter, giving dismal accounts of the affair of Oriskany, and of the impossibility of getting any succor to the garrison; of the probability that Burgoyne and his army were before Albany, and advising surrender to prevent inevitable destruction. It is probable that they were persuaded, rather than compelled, to write the letter, which took its tone from their own depressed feelings and the misrepresentations of those around them. St. Leger accompanied the letter with warnings that, should the garrison persist in resistance, he would not be able to restrain the fury of the savages; who, though held in check for the present, threatened, if further provoked, to revenge the deaths of their warriors and chiefs by slaughtering the garrison, and laying waste the whole valley of the Mohawk.

All this failing to shake the resolution of Gansevoort, St. Leger next issued an appeal to the inhabitants of Tryon County, signed by their old neighbors, Sir John

Johnson, Colonel Claus, and Colonel Butler, promising pardon and protection to all who should submit to royal authority, and urging them to send a deputation of their principal men to overcome the mulish obstinacy of the garrison, and save the whole surrounding country from Indian ravage and massacre. The people of the county, however, were as little to be moved as the garrison.

St. Leger now began to lose heart. The fort proved more capable of defense than he had anticipated. His artillery was too light, and the ramparts, being of sod, were not easily battered. He was obliged reluctantly to resort to the process of sapping and mining, and began to make regular approaches.

Gansevoort, seeing the siege was likely to be protracted, resolved to send to General Schuyler for succor. Colonel Willett volunteered to undertake the perilous errand. He was accompanied by Lieutenant Stockwell, an excellent woodsman, who served as a guide. They left the fort on the 10th, after dark, by a sally-port, passed by the British sentinels and close by the Indian camp, without being discovered, and made their way through bog and morass and pathless forests, and all kinds of risks and hardships, until they reached the German Flats on the Mohawk. Here Willett procured a couple of horses, and by dint of hoof arrived at the camp of General Schuyler at Stillwater. A change had come over the position of that commander four days previous to the arrival of Colonel Willett, as we shall relate in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

SCHUYLER HEARS OF THE AFFAIR OF ORISKANY.—APPLIES FOR REINFORCEMENTS.—HIS APPEAL TO THE PATRIOTISM OF STARK.—SCHUYLER SUPERSEDED.—HIS CONDUCT THEREUPON.—RELIEF SENT TO FORT STANWIX.—ARNOLD VOLUNTEERS TO CONDUCT IT.—CHANGE OF ENCAMPMENT.—PATRIOTIC DETERMINATION OF SCHUYLER.—DETACHMENT OF THE ENEMY AGAINST BENNINGTON.—GERMANS AND THEIR INDIAN ALLIES.—BAUM, THE HESSIAN LEADER.—STARK IN THE FIELD.—MUSTERING OF THE MILITIA.—A BELLIGERENT PARSON.—BATTLE OF BENNINGTON.—BREYMAN TO THE RESCUE.—ROUTED.—RECEPTION OF THE NEWS IN THE RIVAL CAMPS.—WASHINGTON URGES NEW ENGLAND TO FOLLOW UP THE BLOW.

CHUYLER was in Albany in the early part of August, making stirring appeals in every direction for reinforcements. Burgoyne was advancing upon him; he had received news of the disastrous affair at Oriskany, and the death of General Herkimer, and Tryon County was crying to him for assistance. One of his appeals was to the veteran John Stark, the comrade of Putnam in the French war and the battle of Bunker's Hill. He had his farm in the Hampshire Grants, and his name was a tower of strength among the Green Mountain Boys. But Stark was soured with government, and had retired from service, his name having been omitted in the list of promotions. Hearing that

he was on a visit to Lincoln's camp at Manchester, Schuyler wrote to that General, "Assure General Stark that I have acquainted Congress of his situation, and that I trust and entreat he will, in the present alarming crisis, waive his right; the greater the sacrifice he makes to his feelings, the greater will be the honor due to him for not having suffered any consideration whatever to come in competition with the weal of his country: entreat him to march immediately to our army."

Schuyler had instant call to practice the very virtue he was inculcating. He was about to mount his horse on the 10th, to return to the camp at Stillwater, when a despatch from Congress was put into his hand containing the resolves which recalled him to attend a court of inquiry about the affair of Ticonderoga, and requested Washington to appoint an officer to succeed him.

Schuyler felt deeply the indignity of being thus recalled at a time when an engagement was apparently at hand, but endeavored to console himself with the certainty that a thorough investigation of his conduct would prove how much he was entitled to the thanks of his country. He intimated the same in his reply to Congress; in the meantime, he considered it his duty to remain at his post until his successor should arrive, or some officer in the department be nominated to the command. Returning, therefore, to the camp at Stillwater, he continued to conduct the affairs of the army with

unremitting zeal. "Until the country is in safety," said he, "I will stifle my resentment."

His first care was to send relief to Gansevoort and his beleaguered garrison. Eight hundred men were all that he could spare from his army in its present threatened state. A spirited and effective officer was wanted to lead them. Arnold was in camp; recently sent on as an efficient coadjutor, by Washington; he was in a state of exasperation against the government, having just learnt that the question of rank had been decided against him in Congress. Indeed, he would have retired instantly from the service, had not Schuyler prevailed on him to remain until the impending danger was over. It was hardly to be expected, that in his irritated mood he would accept the command of the detachment, if offered to him. Arnold, however, was a combustible character. The opportunity of an exploit flashed on his adventurous spirit. He stepped promptly forward and volunteered to lead the enterprise. "No public nor private injury or insult," said he, "shall prevail on me to forsake the cause of my injured and oppressed country, until I see peace and liberty restored to her, or nobly die in the attempt." *

After the departure of this detachment, it was unanimously determined in a council of war of Schuyler and his general officers, that the post at Stillwater was alto-

* Letter to Gates. Gates' *Papers.*

gether untenable with their actual force; part of the army, therefore, retired to the islands at the fords on the mouth of the Mohawk River, where it empties into the Hudson, and a brigade was posted above the Falls of the Mohawk, called the Cohoes, to prevent the enemy from crossing there. It was considered a strong position, where they could not be attacked without great disadvantage to the assailant.

The feelings of Schuyler were more and more excited as the game of war appeared drawing to a crisis. "I am resolved," writes he to his friend Duane, "to make another sacrifice to my country, and risk the censure of Congress by remaining in this quarter *after* I am relieved, and bringing up the militia to the support of this weak army."

As yet he did not know who was to be his successor in the command. A letter from Duane informed him that General Gates was the man.

Still the noble part of Schuyler's nature was in the ascendant. "Your fears may be up," writes he in reply, "lest the ill-treatment I have experienced at his hands, should so far get the better of my judgment as to embarrass him. Do not, my dear friend, be uneasy on that account. I am incapable of sacrificing my country to a resentment, however just; and I trust I shall give an example of what a good citizen ought to do when he is in my situation."

We will now take a view of occurrences on the right

and left of Burgoyne, and show the effect of Schuyler's measures, poorly seconded as they were, in crippling and straitening the invading army. And first, we will treat of the expedition against Bennington. This was a central place, whither the live stock was driven from various parts of the Hampshire Grants, and whence the American army derived its supplies. It was a great deposit, also, of grain of various kinds, and of wheel carriages; the usual guard was militia, varying from day to day. Bennington was to be surprised. The country was to be scoured from Rockingham to Otter Creek, in quest of provisions for the army, horses and oxen for draft, and horses for the cavalry. All public magazines were to be sacked. All cattle belonging to royalists, and which could be spared by their owners, were to be paid for. All rebel flocks and herds were to be driven away.

Generals Phillips and Riedesel demurred strongly to the expedition, but their counsels were outweighed by those of Colonel Skene, the royalist. He knew, he said, all the country thereabout. The inhabitants were as five to one in favor of the royal cause, and would be prompt to turn out on the first appearance of a protecting army. He was to accompany the expedition, and much was expected from his personal influence and authority.

Lieutenant-colonel Baum was to command the detachment. He had under him, according to Burgoyne, two hundred dismounted dragoons of the regiment of Riede-

sel, Captain Fraser's marksmen, which were the only British, all the Canadian volunteers, a party of the provincials who perfectly knew the country, one hundred Indians, and two light pieces of cannon. The whole detachment amounted to about five hundred men. The dragoons, it was expected, would supply themselves with horses in the course of the foray, and a skeleton corps of royalists would be filled up by recruits.

The Germans had no great liking for the Indians as fellow campaigners; especially those who had come from Upper Canada under St. Luc. "These savages are heathens, huge, warlike, and enterprising, but wicked as Satan," writes a Hessian officer. "Some say they are cannibals, but I do not believe it; though in their fury they will tear the flesh off their enemies with their teeth. They have a martial air, and their wild ornaments become them." * St. Luc, who commanded them, had been a terror to the English colonists in the French war, and it was intimated that he possessed great treasures of "old English scalps." He and his warriors, however, had disappeared from camp since the affair of Miss McCrea. The present were Indians from Lower Canada.

The choice of German troops for this foray, was much sneered at by the British officers. "A corps could not have been found in the whole army," said they, "so unfit

* Schlözer's *Briefwechsel*, Th. iii. Heft xvii.

for a service requiring rapidity of motion, as Riedesel's dragoons. The very hat and sword of one of them weighed nearly as much as the whole equipment of a British soldier. The worst British regiment in the service would march two miles to their one."

To be nearer at hand in case assistance should be required, Burgoyne encamped on the east side of the Hudson, nearly opposite Saratoga, throwing over a bridge of boats by which General Fraser, with the advanced guard, crossed to that place. Colonel Baum set out from camp at break of day, on the 13th of August. All that had been predicted of his movements was verified. The badness of the road, the excessive heat of the weather, and the want of carriages and horses were alleged in excuse; but slow and unapt men ever meet with impediments. Some cattle, carts, and wagons, were captured at Cambridge; a few horses also were brought in; but the Indians killed or drove off all that fell into their hands, unless they were paid in cash for their prizes. "The country people of these parts," writes the Hessian narrator, "came in crowds to Governor Skene, as he was called, and took the oath of allegiance; but even these faithless people," adds he, "were subsequently our bitterest assailants."

Baum was too slow a man to take a place by surprise. The people of Bennington heard of his approach and were on the alert. The veteran Stark was there with eight or nine hundred troops. During the late alarms

the militia of the State had been formed into two brigades, one to be commanded by General William Whipple; Stark had with difficulty been prevailed upon to accept the command of the other, upon the express condition that he should not be obliged to join the main army, but should be left to his own discretion, to make war in his own partisan style, hovering about the enemy in their march through the country, and accountable to none but the authorities of New Hampshire.

General Lincoln had informed Stark of the order of General Schuyler, that all the militia should repair to Stillwater, but the veteran refused to comply. He had taken up arms, he said, in a moment of exigency, to defend the neighborhood, which would be exposed to the ravages of the enemy, should he leave it, and he held himself accountable solely to the authorities of New Hampshire. This act of insubordination might have involved the doughty but somewhat testy old general in subsequent difficulty, had not his sword carved out an ample excuse for him.

Having heard that Indians had appeared at Cambridge, twelve miles to the north of Bennington, on the 13th, he sent out two hundred men under Colonel Gregg in quest of them. In the course of the night he learnt that they were mere scouts in advance of a force marching upon Bennington. He immediately rallied his brigade, called out the militia of the neighborhood, and sent off for Colonel Seth Warner (the quondam associate of

Ethan Allen) and his regiment of militia, who were with General Lincoln at Manchester.

Lincoln instantly detached them, and Warner and his men marched all night through drenching rain, arriving at Stark's camp in the morning, dripping wet.

Stark left them at Bennington to dry and rest themselves, and then to follow on; in the meantime, he pushed forward with his men to support the party sent out the preceding day, under Gregg, in quest of the Indians. He met them about five miles off, in full retreat, Baum and his force a mile in their rear.

Stark halted and prepared for action. Baum also halted, posted himself on a high ground at a bend of the little river Walloomscoick, and began to intrench himself. Stark fell back a mile, to wait for reinforcements and draw down Baum from his strong position. A skirmish took place between the advance guards; thirty of Baum's men were killed, and two Indian chiefs.

An incessant rain on the 15th prevented an attack on Baum's camp, but there was continual skirmishing. The colonel strengthened his intrenchments, and finding he had a larger force to contend with than he had anticipated, sent off in all haste to Burgoyne for reinforcements. Colonel Breyman marched off immediately, with five hundred Hessian grenadiers and infantry and two six-pounders, leaving behind him his tents, baggage, and standards. He also found the roads so deep, and the horses so bad, that he was nearly two days getting four-

and-twenty miles. The tactics of the Hessians were against them. "So foolishly attached were they to forms of discipline," writes a British historian, "that in marching through thickets they stopped ten times an hour to dress their ranks." It was here, in fact, that they most dreaded the American rifle. "In the open field," said they, "the rebels are not much; but they are redoubtable in the woods." *

In the meantime the more alert and active Americans had been mustering from all quarters to Stark's assistance, with such weapons as they had at hand. During the night of the 15th, Colonel Symonds arrived with a body of Berkshire militia. Among them was a belligerent parson, full of fight, Allen by name, possibly of the bellicose family of the hero of Ticonderoga. "General," cried he, "the people of Berkshire have been often called out to no purpose; if you don't give them a chance to fight now they will never turn out again." "You would not turn out now, while it is dark and raining, would you?" demanded Stark. "Not just now," was the reply. "Well, if the Lord should once more give us sunshine, and I don't give you fighting enough," rejoined the veteran, "I'll never ask you to turn out again."

On the following morning the sun shone bright, and Stark prepared to attack Baum in his intrenchments; though he had no artillery, and his men, for the most

* Schlözer's *Briefwechsel.*

part, had only their ordinary brown firelocks without bayonets. Two hundred of his men, under Colonel Nichols, were detached to the rear of the enemy's left; three hundred under Colonel Herrick, to the rear of his right; they were to join their forces and attack him in the rear, while colonels Hubbard and Stickney, with two hundred men, diverted his attention in front.

Colonel Skene and the royalists, when they saw the Americans issuing out of the woods on different sides, persuaded themselves, and endeavored to persuade Baum, that these were the loyal people of the country flocking to his standard. The Indians were the first to discover the truth. "The woods are full of Yankees," cried they, and retreated in single file between the troops of Nichols and Herrick, yelling like demons and jingling cow bells. Several of them, however, were killed or wounded as they thus ran the gauntlet.

At the first sound of fire-arms Stark, who had remained with the main body in camp, mounted his horse and gave the word, *forward!* He had promised his men the plunder of the British camp. The homely speech made by him when in sight of the enemy, has often been cited. "Now, my men! There are the red-coats! Before night they must be ours, or Molly Stark will be a widow!"

Baum soon found himself assailed on every side, but he defended his works bravely. His two pieces of artillery, advantageously planted, were very effective, and his troops, if slow in march, were steady in action. For

two hours the discharge of fire-arms was said to have been like the constant rattling of the drum. Stark in his despatches compared it to a "continued clap of thunder." It was the hottest fight he had ever seen. He inspired his men with his own impetuosity. They drove the royalist troops upon the Hessians, and pressing after them stormed the works with irresistible fury. A Hessian eye-witness declares that this time the rebels fought with desperation, pressing within eight paces of the loaded cannon to take surer aim at the artillerists. The latter were slain; the cannon captured. The royalists and Canadians took flight, and escaped to the woods. The Germans still kept their ground, and fought bravely, until there was not a cartridge left. Baum and his dragoons then took to their broadswords and the infantry to their bayonets, and endeavored to cut their way to a road in the woods, but in vain; many were killed, more wounded, Baum among the number, and all who survived were taken prisoners.*

The victors now dispersed, some to collect booty, some to attend to the wounded, some to guard the prisoners, and some to seek refreshments, being exhausted by hunger and fatigue. At this critical juncture, Breyman's tardy reinforcement came, making its way heavily and slowly to the scene of action, joined by many of the enemy who had fled. Attempts were made to rally the

* *Briefe aus Amerika.* Schlözer's *Briefwechsel*, Th. iii. Heft xiii.

militia; but they were in complete confusion. Nothing would have saved them from defeat, had not Colonel Seth Warner's corps fortunately arrived from Bennington, fresh from repose, and advanced to meet the enemy, while the others regained their ranks. It was four o'clock in the afternoon when this second action commenced. It was fought from wood to wood, and hill to hill, for several miles, until sunset. The last stand of the enemy was at Van Schaick's mill, where, having expended all their ammunition, of which each man had forty rounds, they gave way, and retreated, under favor of the night, leaving two field-pieces and all their baggage in the hands of the Americans. Stark ceased to pursue them, lest in the darkness his men should fire upon each other. "Another hour of daylight," said he in his report, "and I should have captured the whole body." The veteran had had a horse shot under him, but escaped without wound or bruise.

Four brass field-pieces, nine hundred dragoon swords, a thousand stand of arms, and four ammunition wagons were the spoils of this victory. Thirty-two officers, five hundred and sixty-four privates, including Canadians and loyalists were taken prisoners. The number of slain was very considerable, but could not be ascertained, many having fallen in the woods. The brave but unfortunate Baum did not long survive. The Americans had one hundred killed and wounded.

Burgoyne was awakened in his camp towards daylight

of the 17th, by tidings that Colonel Baum had surrendered. Next came word that Colonel Breyman was engaged in severe and doubtful conflict. The whole army was roused, and were preparing to hasten to his assistance, when one report after another gave assurance that he was on his way back in safety. The main body, therefore, remained in camp at the Batten kiln; but Burgoyne forded that stream with the 47th regiment and pushed forward until four o'clock, when he met Breyman and his troops, weary and haggard with hard fighting and hard marching, in hot weather. In the evening all returned to their old encampments.*

General Schuyler was encamped on Van Schaick's Island at the mouth of the Mohawk River, when a letter from General Lincoln, dated Bennington, August 18th, informed him of "the capital blow given the enemy by General Stark." "I trust," replies he, August 19th, "that the severity with which they have been handled will retard General Burgoyne's progress. Part of his force was yesterday afternoon about three miles and a half above Stillwater. If the enemy have entirely left that part of the country you are in, I think it would be advisable for you to move towards Hudson River tending towards Stillwater."

"Governor Clinton," writes he to Stark on the same day, "is coming up with a body of militia, and I trust

* Schlözer's *Briefwechsel*, Th. iii. Heft xiii.

that after what the enemy have experienced from you, their progress will be retarded, and that we shall see them driven out of this part of the country."

He now hoped to hear that Arnold had raised the siege of Fort Stanwix. "If that take place," said he, "it will be possible to engage two or three hundred Indians to join this army, and Congress may rest assured that my best endeavors shall not be wanting to accomplish it."

Tidings of the affair of Bennington reached Washington, just before he moved his camp from the neighborhood of Philadelphia to Wilmington, and it relieved his mind from a world of anxious perplexity. In a letter to Putnam he writes, "As there is not now the least danger of General Howe's going to New England, I hope the whole force of that country will turn out, and, by following the great stroke struck by General Stark near Bennington, entirely crush General Burgoyne, who, by his letter to Colonel Baum, seems to be in want of almost everything."

We will now give the fate of Burgoyne's detachment, under St. Leger, sent to capture Fort Stanwix, and ravage the valley of the Mohawk.

CHAPTER XVII.

STRATAGEM OF ARNOLD TO RELIEVE FORT STANWIX.—YAN YOST CUYLER.—THE SIEGE PRESSED.—INDIANS INTRACTABLE.—SUCCESS OF ARNOLD'S STRATAGEM.—HARASSED RETREAT OF ST. LEGER.—MORAL EFFECT OF THE TWO BLOWS GIVEN TO THE ENEMY.—BRIGHTENING PROSPECTS IN THE AMERICAN CAMP.—ARRIVAL OF GATES.—MAGNANIMOUS CONDUCT OF SCHUYLER.—POORLY REQUITED BY GATES.—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GATES AND BURGOYNE CONCERNING THE MURDER OF MISS McCREA.

ARNOLD'S march to the relief of Fort Stanwix was slower than suited his ardent and impatient spirit. He was detained in the valley of the Mohawk by bad roads, by the necessity of waiting for baggage and ammunition wagons, and for militia recruits who turned out reluctantly. He sent missives to Colonel Gansevoort assuring him that he would relieve him in the course of a few days. "Be under no kind of apprehension," writes he. "I know the strength of the enemy, and *how to deal with them.*"

In fact, conscious of the smallness of his force, he had resorted to stratagem, sending emissaries ahead to spread exaggerated reports of the number of his troops, so as to work on the fears of the enemy's Indian allies and induce them to desert. The most important of these

emissaries was one Yan Yost Cuyler, an eccentric half-witted fellow, known throughout the country as a rank tory. He had been convicted as a spy, and only spared from the halter on the condition that he would go into St. Leger's camp, and spread alarming reports among the Indians, by whom he was well known. To insure a faithful discharge of his mission, Arnold detained his brother as a hostage.

On his way up the Mohawk Valley, Arnold was joined by a New York regiment, under Colonel James Livingston, sent by Gates to reinforce him. On arriving at the German Flats he received an express from Colonel Gansevoort, informing him that he was still besieged, but in high spirits and under no apprehensions. In a letter to Gates, written from the German Flats (August 21st), Arnold says, "I leave this place this morning with twelve hundred continental troops and a handful of militia for Fort Schuyler, still besieged by a number equal to ours. You will hear of my being victorious—or no more. As soon as the safety of this part of the country will permit, I will fly to your assistance." *

All this while St. Leger was advancing his parallels and pressing the siege; while provisions and ammunition were rapidly decreasing within the fort. St. Leger's Indian allies, however, were growing sullen and intractable. This slow kind of warfare, this war with the spade,

* Gates's *Papers.*

they were unaccustomed to, and they by no means relished it. Beside, they had been led to expect easy times, little fighting, many scalps, and much plunder; whereas they had fought hard, lost many of their best chiefs, been checked in their cruelty, and gained no booty.

At this juncture, scouts brought word that a force one thousand strong was marching to the relief of the fort. Eager to put his savages in action, St. Leger in a council of war offered to their chiefs to place himself at their head, with three hundred of his best troops, and meet the enemy as they advanced. It was agreed, and they sallied forth together to choose a fighting ground. By this time rumors stole into the camp doubling the number of the approaching enemy. Burgoyne's whole army were said to have been defeated. Lastly came Yan Yost Cuyler, with his coat full of bullet holes, giving out that he had escaped from the hands of the Americans, and had been fired upon by them. His story was believed, for his wounded coat corroborated it, and he was known to be a royalist. Mingling among his old acquaintances, the Indians, he assured them that the Americans were close at hand and "numerous as the leaves on the trees."

Arnold's stratagem succeeded. The Indians, fickle as the winds, began to desert. Sir John Johnson and Colonels Claus and Butler endeavored in vain to reassure and retain them. In a little while two hundred had decamped, and the rest threatened to do so likewise, unless St. Leger retreated.

The unfortunate colonel found too late what little reliance was to be placed upon Indian allies. He determined, on the 22d, to send off his sick, his wounded, and his artillery by Wood Creek that very night, and to protect them by the line of march. The Indians, however, goaded on by Arnold's emissaries, insisted on instant retreat. St. Leger still refused to depart before nightfall. The savages now became ungovernable. They seized upon liquor of the officers about to be embarked, and getting intoxicated, behaved like very fiends.

In a word, St. Leger was obliged to decamp about noon, in such hurry and confusion that he left his tents standing, and his artillery, with most of his baggage, ammunition, and stores, fell into the hands of the Americans.

A detachment from the garrison pursued and harassed him for a time; but his greatest annoyance was from his Indian allies, who plundered the boats which conveyed such baggage as had been brought off; murdered all stragglers who lagged in the rear, and amused themselves by giving false alarms to keep up the panic of the soldiery; who would throw away muskets, knapsacks, and everything that impeded their flight.

It was not until he reached Onondaga Falls, that St. Leger discovered by a letter from Burgoyne, and floating reports brought by the bearer, that he had been the dupe of a *ruse de guerre*, and that at the time the advancing foe were reported to be close upon his haunches, they were not within forty miles of him.

Such was the second blow to Burgoyne's invading army; but before the news of it reached that doomed commander, he had already been half paralyzed by the disaster at Bennington.

The moral effect of these two blows was such as Washington had predicted. Fortune, so long adverse, seemed at length to have taken a favorable turn. People were roused from their despondency. There was a sudden exultation throughout the country. The savages had disappeared in their native forests. The German veterans, so much vaunted and dreaded, had been vanquished by militia, and British artillery captured by men, some of whom had never seen a cannon.

Means were now augmenting in Schuyler's hands Colonels Livingston and Pierre Van Courtlandt, forwarded by Putnam, were arrived. Governor Clinton was daily expected with New York militia from the Highlands. The arrival of Arnold was anticipated with troops and artillery, and Lincoln with the New England militia. At this propitious moment, when everything was ready for the sickle to be put into the harvest, General Gates arrived in the camp.

Schuyler received him with the noble courtesy to which he pledged himself. After acquainting him with all the affairs of the department, the measures he had taken and those he had projected, he informed him of his having signified to Congress his intention to remain in that quarter for the present, and render every service in

his power; and he entreated Gates to call upon him for counsel and assistance whenever he thought proper.

Gates was in high spirits. His letters to Washington show how completely he was aware that an easy path of victory had been opened for him. "Upon my leaving Philadelphia," writes he, "the prospect this way appeared most gloomy, but the severe checks the enemy have met with at Bennington and Tryon County, have given a more pleasing view of public affairs. Particular accounts of the signal victory gained by General Stark, and of the severe blow General Herkimer gave Sir John Johnson and the scalpers under his command, have been transmitted to your Excellency by General Schuyler. I anxiously expect the arrival of an express from General Arnold, with an account of the total defeat of the enemy in that quarter.

"I cannot sufficiently thank your Excellency for sending Colonel Morgan's corps to this army. They will be of the greatest service to it; for, until the late success this way, I am told the army were quite panic-struck by the Indians, and their tory and Canadian assassins in Indian dress."

Governor Clinton was immediately expected in camp, and he intended to consult with him and General Lincoln upon the best plan to distress, and, he hoped, finally to defeat the enemy. "We shall no doubt," writes he, "unanimously agree in sentiment with your Excellency, to keep generals Lincoln and Stark upon the flank and

rear of the enemy, while the main body opposes them in front."

Not a word does he say of consulting Schuyler, who, more than any one else, was acquainted with the department and its concerns, who was in constant correspondence with Washington, and had coöperated with him in effecting the measures which had produced the present promising situation of affairs. So far was he from responding to Schuyler's magnanimity, and profiting by his nobly offered counsel and assistance, that he did not even ask him to be present at his first council of war, although he invited up General Ten Broeck of the militia from Albany to attend it.

His conduct in this respect provoked a caustic remark from the celebrated Gouverneur Morris. "The commander-in-chief of the Northern department," said he, "may, if he please, neglect to ask or disdain to receive advice, but those who know him, will, I am sure, be convinced that he wants it."

Gates opened hostilities against Burgoyne with the pen. He had received a letter from that commander, complaining of the harsh treatment experienced by the royalists captured at Bennington. "Duty and principle," writes Burgoyne, "made me a public enemy to the Americans who have taken up arms; but I seek to be a generous one; nor have I the shadow of resentment against any individual who does not induce it by acts derogatory to those maxims upon which all men of honor think alike."

There was nothing in this that was not borne out by the conduct and character of Burgoyne; but Gates seized upon the occasion to assail that commander in no measured terms in regard to his Indian allies.

"That the savages," said he, "should in their warfare mangle the unhappy prisoners who fall into their hands, is neither new nor extraordinary; but that the famous General Burgoyne, in whom the fine gentleman is united with the scholar, should hire the savages of America to scalp Europeans; nay more, that he should pay a price for each scalp so barbarously taken, is more than will be believed in Europe, until authenticated facts shall in every gazette confirm the horrid tale."

After this prelude, he went on to state the murder of Miss McCrea, alleging that her murderer was employed by Burgoyne. "Two parents," added he, "with their six children, were treated with the same inhumanity while quietly resting in their once happy and peaceful dwelling. Upwards of one hundred men, women, and children, have perished by the hands of the ruffians, to whom it is asserted you have paid the price of blood."

Gates showed his letter to General Lincoln and Colonel Wilkinson, who demurred to its personality; but he evidently conceived it an achievement of the pen, and spurned their criticism.*

* After General Gates had written his letter to Burgoyne, he called General Lincoln and myself into his apartment, read it to us, and requested our opinion of it, which we declined giving; but being pressed by him

Burgoyne, in a manly reply, declared that he would have disdained to justify himself from such rhapsodies of fiction and calumny, but that his silence might be construed into an admission of their truth, and lead to acts of retaliation. He pronounced all the intelligence cited respecting the cruelties of the Indians to be false, with the exception of the case of Miss McCrea. This he put in its true light, adding, that it had been as sincerely lamented and abhorred by him, as it could be by the tenderest of her friends. "I would not," declared he, "be conscious of the acts you presume to impute to me, for the whole continent of America; though the wealth of worlds was in its bowels, and a paradise upon its surface."

We have already shown what was the real conduct of Burgoyne in this deplorable affair, and General Gates could and should have ascertained it, before "he presumed to impute" to a gallant antagonist and a humane and cultivated gentleman, such base and barbarous policy. It was the government under which Burgoyne served that was chargeable with the murderous acts of the savages. He is rather to be pitied for being obliged to employ such hell-hounds, whom he endeavored in vain to hold in check. Great Britain reaped the reward

with diffidence we concurred in judgment, that he had been too personal; to which the old gentleman replied with his characteristic bluntness, "By G—! I don't believe either of you can mend it:" and the consultation terminated.—Wilkinson's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 231.

of her policy in the odium which it cast upon her cause, and the determined and successful opposition which it provoked in the American bosom.

We will now shift the scene to Washington's camp at Wilmington, where we left him watching the operations of the British fleet, and preparing to oppose the army under Sir William Howe in his designs upon Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LANDING OF HOWE'S ARMY ON ELK RIVER.—MEASURES TO CHECK IT.—EXPOSED SITUATION OF WASHINGTON IN RECONNOITERING.—ALARM OF THE COUNTRY.—PROCLAMATION OF HOWE.—ARRIVAL OF SULLIVAN.—FOREIGN OFFICERS IN CAMP.—DEBORRE.—CONWAY.—FLEURY.—COUNT PULASKI.—FIRST APPEARANCE IN THE ARMY OF "LIGHT-HORSE HARRY" OF VIRGINIA.—WASHINGTON'S APPEAL TO THE ARMY.—MOVEMENTS OF THE RIVAL FORCES.—BATTLE OF THE BRANDYWINE.—RETREAT OF THE AMERICANS.—HALT IN CHESTER.—SCENES IN PHILADELPHIA DURING THE BATTLE.—CONGRESS ORDERS OUT MILITIA.—CLOTHES WASHINGTON WITH EXTRAORDINARY POWERS.—REMOVES TO LANCASTER.—REWARDS TO FOREIGN OFFICERS.

ON the 25th of August, the British army under General Howe began to land from the fleet in Elk River, at the bottom of Chesapeake Bay. The place where they landed was about six miles below the Head of Elk (now Elkton), a small town, the capital of Cecil County. This was seventy miles from Philadelphia; ten miles further from that city than they had been when encamped at Brunswick. The intervening country, too, was less open than the Jerseys, and cut up by deep streams. Sir William had chosen this circuitous route in the expectation of finding friends among the people of Cecil County, and of the lower counties of Pennsylvania; many of whom were Quakers and non-

combatants, and many persons disaffected to the patriot cause.

Early in the evening, Washington received intelligence that the enemy were landing. There was a quantity of public and private stores at the Head of Elk, which he feared would fall into their hands if they moved quickly. Every attempt was to be made to check them. The divisions of Generals Greene and Stephen were within a few miles of Wilmington; orders were sent for them to march thither immediately. The two other divisions, which had halted at Chester to refresh, were to hurry forward. Major-general Armstrong, the same who had surprised the Indian village of Kittaning in the French war, and who now commanded the Pennsylvania militia, was urged to send down, in the cool of the night, all the men he could muster, properly armed. "The first attempt of the enemy," writes Washington, "will be with light parties to seize horses, carriages, and cattle, and we must endeavor to check them at the outset."

General Rodney, therefore, who commanded the Delaware militia, was ordered to throw out scouts and patrols toward the enemy to watch their motions; and to move near them with his troops, as soon as he should be reinforced by the Maryland militia.

Light troops were sent out early in the morning to hover about and harass the invaders. Washington himself, accompanied by General Greene and the Marquis de Lafayette and their aides, rode forth to reconnoiter the

country in the neighborhood of the enemy, and determine how to dispose of his forces when they should be collected. The only eminences near Elk were Iron Hill and Gray's Hill; the latter within two miles of the enemy. It was difficult, however, to get a good view of their encampment, and judge of the number that had landed. Hours were passed in riding from place to place reconnoitering, and taking a military survey of the surrounding country. At length a severe storm drove the party to take shelter in a farm-house. Night came on dark and stormy. Washington showed no disposition to depart. His companions became alarmed for his safety; there was risk of his being surprised, being so near the enemy's camp. He was not to be moved either by advice or entreaties, but remained all night under the farmer's roof. When he left the house at daybreak, however, says Lafayette, he acknowledged his imprudence, and that the most insignificant traitor might have caused his ruin.

Indeed, he ran a similar risk to that which in the previous year had produced General Lee's catastrophe.

The country was in a great state of alarm. The inhabitants were hurrying off their most valuable effects, so that it was difficult to procure cattle and vehicles to remove the public stores. The want of horses, and the annoyances given by the American light troops, however, kept Howe from advancing promptly, and gave time for the greater part of the stores to be saved.

To allay the public alarm, Howe issued a proclamation on the 27th, promising the strictest regularity and order on the part of his army; with security of person and property to all who remained quietly at home, and pardon to those under arms, who should promptly return to their obedience. The proclamation had a quieting effect, especially among the loyalists, who abounded in these parts.

The divisions of generals Greene and Stephen were now stationed several miles in advance of Wilmington, behind White Clay Creek, about ten miles from the Head of Elk. General Smallwood and Colonel Gist had been directed by Congress to take command of the militia of Maryland, who were gathering on the western shore, and Washington sent them orders to coöperate with General Rodney and get in the rear of the enemy.

Washington now felt the want of Morgan and his riflemen, whom he had sent to assist the Northern army; to supply their place, he formed a corps of light troops, by drafting a hundred men from each brigade. The command was given to Major-general Maxwell, who was to hover about the enemy and give them continual annoyance.

The army about this time was increased by the arrival of General Sullivan and his division of three thousand men. He had recently, while encamped at Hanover in Jersey, made a gallant attempt to surprise and capture a corps of one thousand provincials stationed on Staten

Island, at a distance from the fortified camp, and opposite the Jersey shore. The attempt was partially successful; a number of the provincials were captured; but the regulars came to the rescue. Sullivan had not brought sufficient boats to secure a retreat. His rear-guard was captured while waiting for the return of the boats, yet not without a sharp resistance. There was loss on both sides, but the Americans suffered most. Congress had directed Washington to appoint a court of inquiry to investigate the matter; in the meantime Sullivan, whose gallantry remained undoubted, continued in command.

There were now in camp several of those officers and gentlemen from various parts of Europe who had recently pressed into the service, and the suitable employment of whom had been a source of much perplexity to Washington. General Deborre, the French veteran of thirty years' service, commanded a brigade in Sullivan's division. Brigadier-general Conway, the Gallicized Hibernian, was in the division of Lord Stirling. Beside these, there was Louis Fleury, a French gentleman of noble descent, who had been educated as an engineer, and had come out at the opening of the Revolution to offer his services. Washington had obtained for him a captain's commission. Another officer of distinguished merit was the Count Pulaski, a Pole, recommended by Dr. Franklin, as an officer famous throughout Europe for his bravery and conduct in defense of the liberties of his

country against Russia, Austria, and Prussia. In fact, he had been commander-in-chief of the forces of the insurgents. He served at present as a volunteer in the light horse, and as that department was still without a head, and the cavalry was a main object of attention among the military of Poland, Washington suggested to Congress the expediency of giving him the command of it. "This gentleman, we are told," writes Washington, "has been, like us, engaged in defending the liberty and independence of his country, and has sacrificed his fortune to his zeal for those objects. He derives from hence a title to our respect, that ought to operate in his favor as far as the good of the service will permit."

At this time Henry Lee of Virginia, of military renown, makes his first appearance. He was in the twenty-second year of his age, and in the preceding year had commanded a company of Virginia volunteers. He had recently signalized himself in scouting parties, harassing the enemy's pickets. Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress (August 30th), writes; "This minute twenty-four British prisoners arrived, taken yesterday by Captain Lee of the light horse." His adventurous exploits soon won him notoriety, and the popular appellation of "Light-horse Harry." He was favorably noticed by Washington throughout the war. Perhaps there was something beside his bold, dashing spirit, which won him this favor. There may have been early recollections connected with it. Lee was the son of the lady who first

touched Washington's heart in his schoolboy days, the one about whom he wrote rhymes at Mount Vernon and Greenway Court—his "lowland beauty."

Several days were now passed by the commander-in-chief almost continually in the saddle, reconnoitering the roads and passes, and making himself acquainted with the surrounding country; which was very much intersected by rivers and small streams, running chiefly from northwest to southeast. He had now made up his mind to risk a battle in the open field. It is true his troops were inferior to those of the enemy in number, equipments, and discipline. Hitherto, according to Lafayette, "they had fought combats but not battles." Still those combats had given them experience; and though many of them were militia, or raw recruits, yet the divisions of the army had acquired a facility at moving in large masses, and were considerably improved in military tactics. At any rate, it would never do to let Philadelphia, at that time the capital of the States, fall without a blow. There was a carping spirit abroad; a disposition to cavil and find fault, which was prevalent in Philadelphia, and creeping into Congress; something of the nature of what had been indulged respecting General Schuyler and the army of the North. Public impatience called for a battle; it was expected even by Europe; his own valiant spirit required it, though hitherto he had been held in check by superior considerations of expediency, and by the controlling interference of Congress. Congress itself

now spurred him on, and he gave way to the native ardor of his character.

The British army having effected a landing, in which, by the way, it had experienced but little molestation, was formed into two divisions. One, under Sir William Howe, was stationed at Elkton, with its advanced guard at Gray's Hill, about two miles off. The other division, under General Knyphausen, was on the opposite side of the ferry, at Cecil Court House. On the third of September the enemy advanced in considerable force, with three field-pieces, moving with great caution, as the country was difficult, woody, and not well known to them. About three miles in front of White Clay Creek, their vanguard was encountered by General Maxwell and his light troops, and a severe skirmish took place. The fire of the American sharpshooters and riflemen, as usual, was very effective; but being inferior in number, and having no artillery, Maxwell was compelled to retreat across White Clay Creek, with the loss of about forty killed and wounded. The loss of the enemy was supposed to be much greater.

The main body of the American army was now encamped on the east side of Red Clay Creek, on the road leading from Elkton to Philadelphia. The light infantry were in the advance, at White Clay Creek. The armies were from eight to ten miles apart. In this position Washington determined to await the threatened attack.

On the 5th of September he made a stirring appeal to

the army, in his general orders, stating the object of the enemy, the capture of Philadelphia. They had tried it before, from the Jerseys, and had failed. He trusted they would be again disappointed. In their present attempt their all was at stake. The whole would be hazarded in a single battle. If defeated in that, they were totally undone, and the war would be at an end. Now then was the time for the most strenuous exertions. One bold stroke would free the land from rapine, devastation, and brutal outrage. "Two years," said he, "have we maintained the war, and struggled with difficulties innumerable, but the prospect has brightened. Now is the time to reap the fruit of all our toils and dangers; if we behave like men this third campaign will be our last." Washington's numerical force at this time was about fifteen thousand men, but from sickness and other causes the effective force, militia included, did not exceed eleven thousand, and most of these were indifferently armed and equipped. The strength of the British was computed at eighteen thousand men, but, it is thought, not more than fifteen thousand were brought into action.

On the 8th, the enemy advanced in two columns; one appeared preparing to attack the Americans in front, while the other extended its left up the west side of the creek, halting at Milltown, somewhat to the right of the American position. Washington now suspected an intention on the part of Sir William Howe to march by his right, suddenly pass the Brandywine, gain the heights

north of that stream, and cut him off from Philadelphia. He summoned a council of war, therefore, that evening, in which it was determined immediately to change their position, and move to the river in question. By two o'clock in the morning, the army was under march, and by the next evening was encamped on the high grounds in the rear of the Brandywine. The enemy on the same evening moved to Kennet Square, about seven miles from the American position.

The Brandywine Creek, as it is called, commences with two branches, called the East and West branches, which unite in one stream, flowing from west to east about twenty-two miles, and emptying itself into the Delaware about twenty-five miles below Philadelphia. It has several fords; one called Chadd's Ford, was at that time the most practicable, and in the direct route from the enemy's camp to Philadelphia. As the principal attack was expected here, Washington made it the centre of his position, where he stationed the main body of his army, composed of Wayne's, Weedon's, and Muhlenberg's brigades, with the light infantry under Maxwell. An eminence immediately above the ford had been intrenched in the night, and was occupied by Wayne and Proctor's artillery. Weedon's and Muhlenberg's brigades, which were Virginian troops, and formed General Greene's division, were posted in the rear on the heights, as a reserve to aid either wing of the army. With these Washington took his stand. Maxwell's light infantry

were thrown in the advance, south of the Brandywine, and posted on high ground, each side of the road leading to the ford.

The right wing of the army, commanded by Sullivan, and composed of his division and those of Stephen and Stirling, extended up the Brandywine two miles beyond Washington's position. Its light troops and videttes were distributed quite up to the forks. A few detachments of ill-organized and undisciplined cavalry extended across the creek on the extreme right. The left wing, composed of the Pennsylvania militia, under Major-General Armstrong, was stationed about a mile and a half below the main body, to protect the lower fords, where the least danger was apprehended. The Brandywine, which ran in front of the whole line, was now the only obstacle, if such it might be called, between the two armies.

Early on the morning of the 11th, a great column of troops was descried advancing on the road leading to Chadd's Ford. A skirt of woods concealed its force, but it was supposed to be the main body of the enemy ; if so, a general conflict was at hand.

The Americans were immediately drawn out in order of battle. Washington rode along the front of the ranks, and was everywhere received with acclamations. A sharp firing of small arms soon told that Maxwell's light infantry were engaged with the vanguard of the enemy. The skirmishing was kept up for some time with spirit,

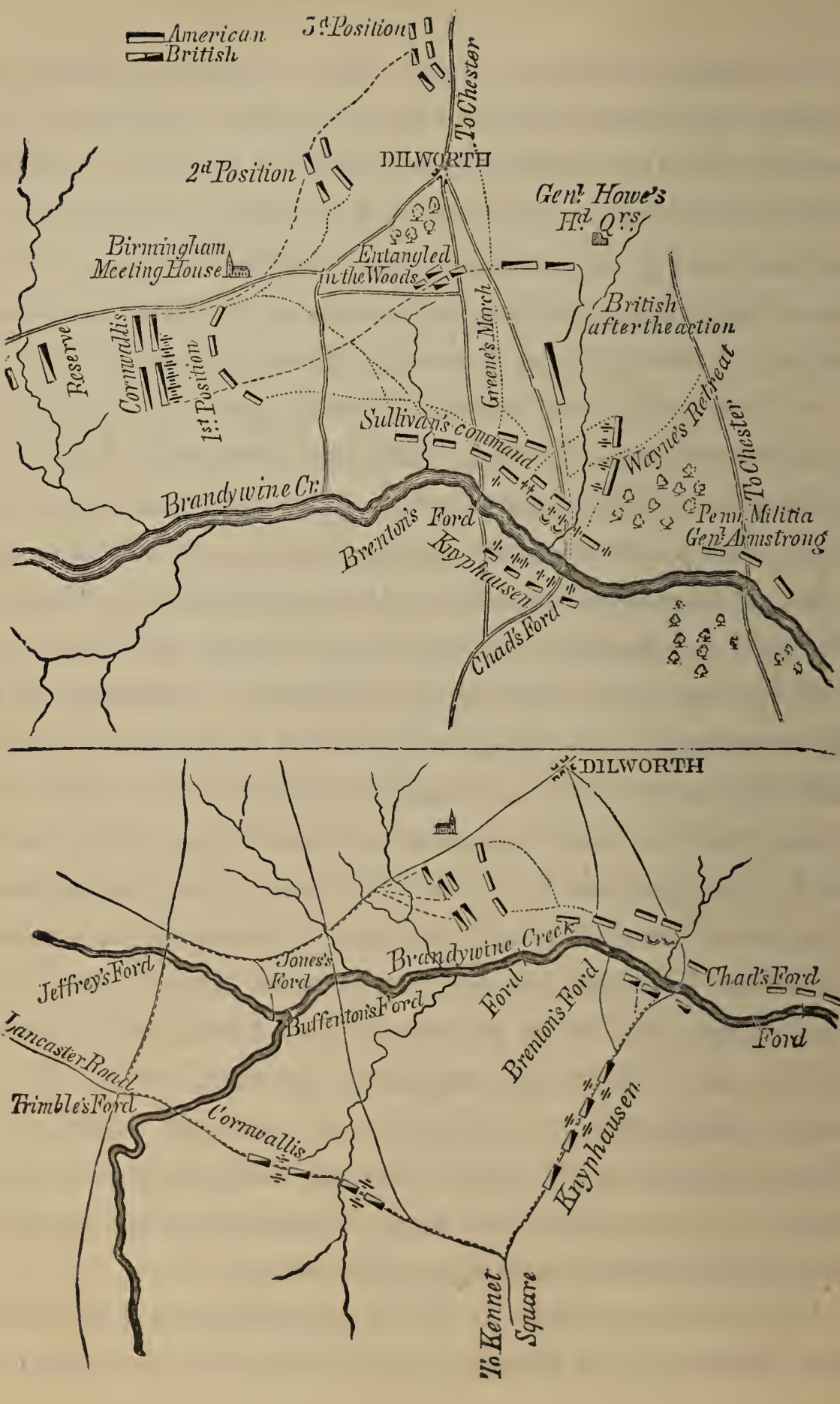
when Maxwell was driven across the Brandywine below the ford. The enemy, who had advanced but slowly, did not attempt to follow, but halted on commanding ground, and appeared to reconnoiter the American position with a view to an attack. A heavy cannonading commenced on both sides, about ten o'clock. The enemy made repeated dispositions to force the ford, which brought on as frequent skirmishes on both sides of the river, for detachments of the light troops occasionally crossed over. One of these skirmishes was more than usually severe; the British flank-guard was closely pressed, a captain and ten or fifteen men were killed, and the guard was put to flight; but a large force came to their assistance, and the Americans were again driven across the stream. All this while there was the noise and uproar of a battle, but little of the reality. The enemy made a great thundering of cannon, but no vigorous onset, and Colonel Harrison, Washington's "old secretary," seeing this cautious and dilatory conduct on their part, wrote a hurried note to Congress, expressing his confident belief that the enemy would be repulsed.

Towards noon came an express from Sullivan, with a note received from a scouting party, reporting that General Howe, with a large body of troops and a park of artillery, was pushing up the Lancaster road, doubtless to cross at the upper fords and turn the right flank of the American position.

Startled by the information, Washington instantly sent

off Colonel Theodoric Bland, with a party of horse, to reconnoiter above the forks and ascertain the truth of the report. In the meantime, he resolved to cross the ford, attack the division in front of him with his whole force, and rout it before the other could arrive. He gave orders for both wings to coöperate, when, as Sullivan was preparing to cross, Major Spicer of the militia rode up, just from the forks, and assured him there was no enemy in that quarter. Sullivan instantly transmitted the intelligence to Washington, whereupon the movement was suspended until positive information could be obtained. After a time came a man of the neighborhood, Thomas Cheyney by name, spurring in all haste, the mare he rode in foam, and himself out of breath. Dashing up to the commander-in-chief, he informed him that he must instantly move, or he would be surrounded. He had come upon the enemy unawares; had been pursued and fired upon, but the fleetness of his mare had saved him. The main body of the British was coming down on the east side of the stream, and was near at hand. Washington replied, that from information just received, it could not be so. "You are mistaken, general," replied the other vehemently; "my life for it, you are mistaken." Then reiterating the fact with an oath, and making a draft of the road in the sand, "put me under guard," added he, "until you find my story true."

Another despatch from Sullivan corroborated it. Colonel Bland, whom Washington had sent to reconnoiter


American
British
3d Position
To Chester
2d Position
DILWORTH
Gen! Howe's
Hd Qrs
Birmingham
Meeting House
Entangled
in the Woods
Greene's March
British
after the action
Reserve
Cornwallis
1st Position
Sullivan's command
Wayne's Retreat
To Chester
Brandywine Cr.
Brenton's Ford
Kynphausen
Penn. Militia
Gen! Armstrong
Chad's Ford
DILWORTH
Jeffrey's Ford
Jones's
Ford
Brandywine Creek
Ford
Chad's Ford
Ford
Buffenton's Ford
Brenton's Ford
Lancaster Road
Trimble's Ford
Cornwallis
Kynhausen
To Kennet
Square

above the forks, had seen the enemy two miles in the rear of Sullivan's right, marching down at a rapid rate, while a cloud of dust showed that there were more troops behind them.

In fact, the old Long Island stratagem had been played over again. Knyphausen with a small division had engrossed the attention of the Americans by a feigned attack at Chadd's Ford, kept up with great noise and prolonged by skirmishes; while the main body of the army under Cornwallis, led by experienced guides, had made a circuit of seventeen miles, crossed the two forks of the Brandywine, and arrived in the neighborhood of Birmingham meeting-house, two miles to the right of Sullivan. It was a capital stratagem, secretly and successfully conducted.

Finding that Cornwallis had thus gained the rear of the army, Washington sent orders to Sullivan to oppose him with the whole right wing, each brigade attacking as soon as it arrived upon the ground. Wayne, in the meantime, was to keep Knyphausen at bay at the ford, and Greene, with the reserve, to hold himself ready to give aid wherever required.

Lafayette, as a volunteer, had hitherto accompanied the commander-in-chief, but now, seeing there was likely to be warm work with the right wing, he obtained permission to join Sullivan, and spurred off with his aide-de-camp to the scene of action. From his narrative, we gather some of the subsequent details.

Sullivan, on receiving Washington's orders, advanced with his own, Stephen's, and Stirling's divisions, and began to form a line in front of an open piece of wood. The time which had been expended in transmitting intelligence, receiving orders, and marching, had enabled Cornwallis to choose his ground and prepare for action. Still more time was given him from the apprehension of the three generals, upon consultation, of being outflanked upon the right; and that the gap between Sullivan's and Stephen's divisions was too wide, and should be closed up. Orders were accordingly given for the whole line to move to the right; and while in execution, Cornwallis advanced rapidly with his troops in the finest order, and opened a brisk fire of musketry and artillery. The Americans made an obstinate resistance, but being taken at a disadvantage, the right and left wings were broken and driven into the woods. The centre stood firm for a while, but being exposed to the whole fire of the enemy, gave way at length also. The British, in following up their advantage, got entangled in the wood. It was here that Lafayette received his wound. He had thrown himself from his horse and was endeavoring to rally the troops, when he was shot through the leg with a musket ball, and had to be assisted into the saddle by his aide-de-camp.

The Americans rallied on a height to the north of Dilworth, and made a still more spirited resistance than at

first, but were again dislodged and obliged to retreat with a heavy loss.

While this was occurring with the right wing, Knyphausen, as soon as he learnt from the heavy firing that Cornwallis was engaged, made a push to force his way across Chadd's Ford in earnest. He was vigorously opposed by Wayne with Proctor's artillery, aided by Maxwell and his infantry. Greene was preparing to second him with the reserve, when he was summoned by Washington to the support of the right wing, which the commander-in-chief had found in imminent peril.

Greene advanced to the relief with such celerity, that it is said, on good authority, his division accomplished the march, or rather run, of five miles, in less than fifty minutes. He arrived too late to save the battle, but in time to protect the broken masses of the right wing, which he met in full flight. Opening his ranks from time to time for the fugitives, and closing them the moment they had passed, he covered their retreat by a sharp and well-directed fire from his field-pieces. His grand stand was made at a place about a mile beyond Dilworth, which, in reconnoitering the neighborhood, Washington had pointed out to him, as well calculated for a second position, should the army be driven out of the first; and here he was overtaken by Colonel Pinckney, an aide-de-camp of the commander-in-chief, ordering him to occupy this position and protect the retreat of the army. The orders were implicitly obeyed. Weedon's brigade was drawn

up in a narrow defile, flanked on both sides by woods, and perfectly commanding the road; while Greene, with Muhlenberg's brigade, passing to the right took his station on the road. The British came on impetuously, expecting but faint opposition. They met with a desperate resistance, and were repeatedly driven back. It was the bloody conflict of the bayonet; deadly on either side, and lasting for a considerable time. Weedon's brigade on the left maintained its stand also with great obstinacy, and the check given to the enemy by these two brigades, allowed time for the broken troops to retreat. Weedon's was at length compelled by superior numbers to seek the protection of the other brigade, which he did in good order, and Greene gradually drew off the whole division in face of the enemy, who, checked by this vigorous resistance, and seeing the day far spent, gave up all further pursuit.

The brave stand made by these brigades had, likewise, been a great protection to Wayne. He had for a long time withstood the attacks of the enemy at Chadd's Ford, until the approach, on the right, of some of the enemy's troops who had been entangled in the woods, showed him that the right wing had been routed. He now gave up the defense of his post, and retreated by the Chester road. Knyphausen's troops were too fatigued to pursue him; and the others had been kept back, as we have shown, by Greene's division. So ended the varied conflict of the day.

Lafayette gives an animated picture of the general retreat, in which he became entangled. He had endeavored to rejoin Washington, but loss of blood compelled him to stop and have his wound bandaged. While thus engaged, he came near being captured. All around him was headlong terror and confusion. Chester road, the common retreat of the broken fragments of the army, from every quarter, was crowded with fugitives, with cannon, with baggage cars, all hurrying forward pell-mell, and obstructing each other; while the thundering of cannon, and volleying of musketry by the contending parties in the rear, added to the confusion and panic of the flight.

The dust, the uproar, and the growing darkness, threw everything into chaos; there was nothing but a headlong struggle forward. At Chester, however, twelve miles from the field of battle, there was a deep stream with a bridge, over which the fugitives would have to pass. Here Lafayette set a guard to prevent their further flight. The commander-in-chief, arriving soon after with Greene and his gallant division, some degree of order was restored, and the whole army took its post behind Chester for the night.

The scene of this battle, which decided the fate of Philadelphia, was within six-and-twenty miles of that city, and each discharge of cannon could be heard there. The two parties of the inhabitants, whig and tory, were to be seen in groups in the squares and public places,

waiting the event in anxious silence. At length a courier arrived. His tidings spread consternation among the friends of liberty. Many left their homes; entire families abandoned everything in terror and despair, and took refuge in the mountains. Congress, the same evening determined to quit the city and repair to Lancaster, whence they subsequently removed to Yorktown. Before leaving Philadelphia, however, they summoned the militia of Pennsylvania, and the adjoining States, to join the main army without delay; and ordered down fifteen hundred continental troops from Putnam's command on the Hudson. They also clothed Washington with power to suspend officers for misbehavior; to fill up all vacancies under the rank of brigadiers; to take all provisions, and other articles necessary for the use of the army, paying, or giving certificates for the same; and to remove, or secure for the benefit of the owners, all goods and effects which might otherwise fall into the hands of the enemy and be serviceable to them. These extraordinary powers were limited to the circumference of seventy miles round head-quarters, and were to continue in force sixty days, unless sooner revoked by Congress.

It may be as well here to notice in advance, the conduct of Congress towards some of the foreigners who had mingled in this battle. Count Pulaski, the Polish nobleman, heretofore mentioned, who acted with great spirit as a volunteer in the light horse, riding up within pistol shot of the enemy to reconnoiter, was given a command

of cavalry with the rank of brigadier-general. Captain Louis Fleury, also, who had acquitted himself with gallantry, and rendered essential aid in rallying the troops, having had a horse killed under him, was presented by Congress with another, as a testimonial of their sense of his merit.

Lafayette speaks, in his memoirs, of the brilliant manner in which General Conway, the chevalier of St. Louis, acquitted himself at the head of eight hundred men, in the encounter with the troops of Cornwallis near Birmingham meeting-house. The veteran Deborre was not equally fortunate in gaining distinction on this occasion. In the awkward change of position in the line when in front of the enemy, he had been the first to move, and without waiting for orders. The consequence was, his brigade fell into confusion, and was put to flight. He endeavored to rally it, and was wounded in the attempt; but his efforts were in vain. Congress ordered a court of inquiry on his conduct, whereupon he resigned his commission, and returned to France, complaining bitterly of his hard treatment. "It was not his fault," he said, "if American troops would run away."

CHAPTER XIX.

GENERAL HOWE NEGLECTS TO PURSUE HIS ADVANTAGE. — WASHINGTON RETREATS TO GERMANTOWN. — RECROSSES THE SCHUYLKILL AND PREPARES FOR ANOTHER ACTION. — PREVENTED BY STORMS OF RAIN. — RETREATS TO FRENCH CREEK. — WAYNE DETACHED TO FALL ON THE ENEMY'S REAR. — HIS PICKETS SURPRISED. — MASSACRE OF WAYNE'S MEN. — MANŒUVERS OF HOWE ON THE SCHUYLKILL. — WASHINGTON SENDS FOR REINFORCEMENTS. — HOWE MARCHES INTO PHILADELPHIA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the rout and precipitate retreat of the American army, Sir William Howe did not press the pursuit, but, passed the night on the field of battle, and remained the two following days at Dilworth, sending out detachments to take post at Concord and Chester, and seize on Wilmington, whither the sick and wounded were conveyed. "Had the enemy marched directly to Derby," observes Lafayette, "the American army would have been cut up and destroyed; they lost a precious night, and it is perhaps the greatest fault in a war in which they have committed many." *

Washington, as usual, profited by the inactivity of

* *Memoires*, tom. i. p. 26.

Howe; quietly retreating through Derby (on the 12th) across the Schuylkill to Germantown, within a short distance of Philadelphia, where he gave his troops a day's repose. Finding them in good spirits, and in nowise disheartened by the recent affair, which they seemed to consider a check rather than a defeat, he resolved to seek the enemy again and give him battle. As preliminary measures, he left some of the Pennsylvania militia in Philadelphia to guard the city; others, under General Armstrong, were posted at the various passes of the Schuylkill, with orders to throw up works; the floating bridge on the lower road was to be unmoored, and the boats collected and taken across the river.

Having taken these precautions against any hostile movement by the lower road, Washington recrossed the Schuylkill on the 14th, and advanced along the Lancaster road, with the intention of turning the left flank of the enemy. Howe, apprised of his intention, made a similar disposition to outflank him. The two armies came in sight of each other, near the Warren Tavern, twenty-three miles from Philadelphia, and were on the point of engaging, but were prevented by a violent storm of rain, which lasted for four-and-twenty hours.

This inclement weather was particularly distressing to the Americans, who were scantily clothed, most of them destitute of blankets, and separated from their tents and baggage. The rain penetrated their cartridge-boxes and the ill-fitted locks of their muskets, rendering the latter

useless, being deficient in bayonets. In this plight, Washington gave up for the present all thought of attacking the enemy, as their discipline in the use of the bayonet, with which they were universally furnished, would give them a great superiority in action. "The hot-headed politicians," writes one of his officers, "will no doubt censure this part of his conduct, while the more judicious will approve it, as not only expedient, but, in such a case, highly commendable. It was, without doubt, chagrining to a person of his fine feelings, to retreat before an enemy not more in number than himself; yet, with a true greatness of spirit, he sacrificed them to the good of his country." * There was evidently a growing disposition again to criticise Washington's movements, yet how well did this officer judge of him.

The only aim, at present, was to get some dry and secure place, where the army might repose and refit. All day, and for a great part of the night, they marched under a cold and pelting rain, and through deep and miry roads, to the Yellow Springs, thence to Warwick, on French Creek; a weary march in stormy weather for troops destitute of every comfort, and nearly a thousand of them actually barefooted. At Warwick furnace, ammunition and a few muskets were obtained, to aid in disputing the passage of the Schuylkill, and the advance of the enemy on Philadelphia.

* *Memoir of Major Samuel Shaw*, by Hon. Josiah Quincy.

From French Creek, Wayne was detached with his division, to get in the rear of the enemy, form a junction with General Smallwood and the Maryland militia, and, keeping themselves concealed, watch for an opportunity to cut off Howe's baggage and hospital train; in the meantime, Washington crossed the Schuylkill at Parker's Ford, and took a position to defend that pass of the river.

Wayne set off in the night, and, by a circuitous march, got within three miles of the left wing of the British encamped at Tredyffrin, and concealing himself in a wood, waited the arrival of Smallwood and his militia. At daybreak he reconnoitered the camp, where Howe, checked by the severity of the weather, had contented himself with uniting his columns, and remained under shelter. All day Wayne hovered about the camp; there were no signs of marching; all kept quiet, but lay too compact to be attacked with prudence. He sent repeated messages to Washington, describing the situation of the enemy, and urging him to come on and attack them in their camp. "Their supineness," said he, in one of his notes, "answers every purpose of giving you time to get up: if they attempt to move, I shall attack them at all events. . . . . There never was, nor never will be, a finer opportunity of giving the enemy a fatal blow than at present. For God's sake push on as fast as possible."

Again, at a later hour, he writes: "The enemy are very quiet, washing and cooking. I expect General Maxwell

on the left flank every moment, and, as I lay on the right, we only want you in their rear to complete Mr. Howe's business. I believe he knows nothing of my situation, as I have taken every precaution to prevent any intelligence getting to him, at the same time keeping a watchful eye on his front, flanks, and rear."

His motions, however, had not been so secret as he imagined. He was in a part of the country full of the disaffected, and Sir William had received accurate information of his force and where he was encamped. General Grey, with a strong detachment, was sent to surprise him at night in his lair. Late in the evening, when Wayne had set his pickets and sentinels, and thrown out his patrols, a countryman brought him word of the meditated attack. He doubted the intelligence, but strengthened his pickets and patrols, and ordered his troops to sleep upon their arms.

At eleven o'clock, the pickets were driven in at the point of the bayonet—the enemy were advancing in column. Wayne instantly took post on the right of his position, to cover the retreat of the left, led by Colonel Humpton, the second in command. The latter was tardy, and incautiously paraded his troops in front of their fires, so as to be in full relief. The enemy rushed on without firing a gun: all was the silent, but deadly work of the bayonet and the cutlass. Nearly three hundred of Humpton's men were killed or wounded, and the rest put to flight. Wayne gave the enemy some well-directed

volleys, and then retreating to a small distance, rallied his troops, and prepared for further defense. The British, however, contented themselves with the blow they had given, and retired with very little loss, taking with them between seventy and eighty prisoners, several of them officers, and eight baggage wagons, heavily laden.

General Smallwood, who was to have coöperated with Wayne, was within a mile of him at the time of his attack; and would have hastened to his assistance with his well-known intrepidity; but he had not the corps under his command with which he had formerly distinguished himself, and his raw militia fled in a panic at the first sight of a return party of the enemy.

Wayne was deeply mortified by the result of this affair, and, finding it severely criticised in the army, demanded a court-martial, which pronounced his conduct everything that was to be expected from an active, brave, and vigilant officer; whatever blame there was in the matter fell upon his second in command, who, by delay, or misapprehension of orders, and an unskillful position of his troops, had exposed them to be massacred.

On the 21st, Sir William Howe made a rapid march high up the Schuylkill, on the road leading to Reading, as if he intended either to capture the military stores deposited there, or to turn the right of the American army. Washington kept pace with him on the opposite side of the river, up to Pott's Grove, about thirty miles from Philadelphia.

The movement on the part of Howe was a mere feint. No sooner had he drawn Washington so far up the river, than, by a rapid countermarch on the night of the 22d, he got to the ford below, threw his troops across on the next morning, and pushed forward for Philadelphia. By the time Washington was apprised of this counter-movement, Howe was too far on his way to be overtaken by harassed, barefooted troops, worn out by constant marching. Feeling the necessity of immediate reinforcements, he wrote on the same day to Putnam at Peekskill: "The situation of our affairs in this quarter calls for every aid and for every effort. I therefore desire that, without a moment's loss of time, you will detach as many effective rank and file under proper generals and officers, as will make the whole number, including those with General McDougall, amount to twenty-five hundred privates and non-commissioned fit for duty.

"I must urge you, by every motive, to send this detachment without the least possible delay. No considerations are to prevent it. It is our first object to defeat, if possible, the army now opposed to us here."

On the next day (24th) he wrote also to General Gates. "This army has not been able to oppose General Howe's with the success that was wished, and needs a reinforcement. I therefore request, if you have been so fortunate as to oblige General Burgoyne to retreat to Ticonderoga, or if you have not, and circumstances will admit, that you will order Colonel Morgan to join me again with his

corps. I sent him up when I thought you materially wanted him; and, if his services can be dispensed with now, you will direct his immediate return."

Having called a council of officers and taken their opinions, which concurred with his own, Washington determined to remain some days at Pott's Grove, to give repose to his troops, and await the arrival of reinforcements.

Sir William Howe halted at Germantown, within a short distance of Philadelphia, and encamped the main body of his army in and about that village; detaching Lord Cornwallis with a large force and a number of officers of distinction, to take formal possession of the city. That general marched into Philadelphia on the 26th, with a brilliant staff and escort, and followed by splendid legions of British and Hessian grenadiers, long trains of artillery and squadrons of light dragoons, the finest troops in the army, all in their best array; stepping to the swelling music of the band playing "God save the King," and presenting with their scarlet uniforms, their glittering arms and flaunting feathers, a striking contrast to the poor patriot troops, who had recently passed through the same streets, weary and wayworn, and happy if they could cover their raggedness with a brown linen hunting-frock, and decorate their caps with a sprig of evergreen.

In this way the British took possession of the city, so long the object of their awkward attempts, and regarded

by them as a triumphant acquisition, having been the seat of the general government, the capital of the confederacy. Washington maintained his characteristic equanimity. "This is an event," writes he to Governor Trumbull, "which we have reason to wish had not happened, and which will be attended with several ill consequences; but I hope it will not be so detrimental as many apprehend, and that a little time and perseverance will give us some favorable opportunity of recovering our loss, and of putting our affairs in a more flourishing condition."

He had heard of the prosperous situation of affairs in the Northern department, and the repeated checks given to the enemy. "I flatter myself," writes he, "we shall soon hear that they have been succeeded by other fortunate and interesting events, as the two armies, by General Gates' letter, were encamped near each other."

We will now revert to the course of the campaign in that quarter, the success of which he trusted would have a beneficial influence on the operations in which he was personally engaged. Indeed the operations in the Northern department formed, as we have shown, but a part of his general scheme, and were constantly present to his thoughts. His generals had each his own individual enterprise, or his own department to think about; Washington had to think for the whole.

CHAPTER XX.

DUBIOUS POSITION OF BURGOYNE. — COLLECTS HIS FORCES.—LADIES OF DISTINCTION IN HIS CAMP.—LADY HARRIET ACKLAND.—THE BARONESS DE RIEDESEL.—AMERICAN ARMY REINFORCED.—SILENT MOVEMENTS OF BURGOYNE.—WATCHED FROM THE SUMMIT OF THE HILLS.—HIS MARCH ALONG THE HUDSON.—POSITION OF THE TWO CAMPS.—BATTLE OF THE 19TH SEPTEMBER.—BURGOYNE ENCAMPS NEARER.—FORTIFIES HIS CAMP.—PROMISED CO-OPERATION BY SIR HENRY CLINTON.—DETERMINES TO AWAIT IT.—QUARREL BETWEEN GATES AND ARNOLD.—ARNOLD DEPRIVED OF COMMAND.—BURGOYNE WAITS FOR CO-OPERATION.

HE checks which Burgoyne had received on right and left, and, in a great measure, through the spontaneous rising of the country, had opened his eyes to the difficulties of his situation, and the errors as to public feeling into which he had been led by his tory counselors. "The great bulk of the country is undoubtedly with the Congress in principle and zeal," writes he, "and their measures are executed with a secrecy and despatch that are not to be equaled. Wherever the king's forces point, militia, to the amount of three or four thousand, assemble in twenty-four hours: *they bring with them their subsistence, etc., and, the alarm over, they return to their farms.* The Hampshire Grants, in particular, a country unpeopled and almost unknown

last war, now abounds in the most active and most rebellious race of the continent, and hangs like a gathering storm upon my left." What a picture this gives of a patriotic and warlike yeomanry. He complains, too, that no operation had yet been undertaken in his favor; the Highlands of the Hudson had not even been threatened; the consequence was that two brigades had been detached from them to strengthen the army of Gates, strongly posted near the mouth of the Mohawk River, with a superior force of continental troops, and as many militia as he pleased.

Burgoyne declared, that had he any latitude in his orders, he would remain where he was, or perhaps fall back to Fort Edward, where his communication with Lake George would be secure, and wait for some event that might assist his movement forward; his orders, however, were positive to force a junction with Sir William Howe. He did not feel at liberty, therefore, to remain inactive longer than would be necessary to receive the reinforcements of the additional companies, the German drafts and recruits actually on Lake Champlain, and to collect provisions enough for twenty-five days. These reinforcements were indispensable, because, from the hour he should pass the Hudson River and proceed towards Albany, all safety of communication would cease.

"I yet do not despair," adds he, manfully. "Should I succeed in forcing my way to Albany, and find that country in a state to subsist my army, I shall think no more

of a retreat, but, at the worst, fortify there, and await Sir William's operations."*

A feature of peculiar interest is given to this wild and rugged expedition, by the presence of two ladies of rank and refinement, involved in its perils and hardships. One was Lady Harriet Ackland, daughter of the Earl of Ilchester, and wife of Major Ackland of the grenadiers; the other was the Baroness De Riedesel, wife of the Hessian major-general. Both of these ladies had been left behind in Canada. Lady Harriet, however, on hearing that her husband was wounded in the affair at Hubbardton, instantly set out to rejoin him, regardless of danger, and of her being in a condition before long to become a mother.

Crossing the whole length of Lake Champlain, she found him in a sick bed at Skenesborough. After his recovery, she refused to leave him, but had continued with the army ever since. Her example had been imitated by the Baroness De Riedesel, who had joined the army at Fort Edward, bringing with her her three small children. The friendship and sympathy of these two ladies in all scenes of trial and suffering, and their devoted attachment to their husbands, afford touching episodes in the story of the campaign. When the army was on the march, they followed a little distance in the rear, Lady Harriet in a two-wheeled tumbril, the Baroness in a calash, capable of holding herself, her children and

* Letter to Lord George Germaine.

two servants. The latter has left a journal of her campaigning, which we may occasionally cite. "They moved," she says, "in the midst of soldiery, who were full of animation, singing camp songs, and panting for action. They had to travel through almost impassable woods; in a picturesque and beautiful region; but which was almost abandoned by its inhabitants, who had hastened to join the American army." "They added much to its strength," observes she, "as they were all good marksmen, and the love of their country inspired them with more than ordinary courage." *

The American army had received various reinforcements: the most efficient was Morgan's corps of riflemen, sent by Washington. He had also furnished it with artillery. It was now about ten thousand strong. Schuyler, finding himself and his proffered services slighted by Gates, had returned to Albany. His patriotism was superior to personal resentments. He still continued to promote the success of the campaign, exerting his influence over the Indian tribes, to win them from the enemy. At Albany he held talks and war feasts with deputations of Oneida, Tuscarora, and Onondaga warriors; and procured scouting parties of them, which he sent to the camp, and which proved of great service. His former aide-de-camp, Colonel Brockholst Livingston, and his secretary, Colonel Varick, remained in camp, and kept

* Riedesel's *Memoirs*.

him informed by letter of passing occurrences. They were much about the person of General Arnold, who, since his return from relieving Fort Stanwix, commanded the left wing of the army. Livingston, in fact, was with him as aide-de-camp. The jealousy of Gates was awakened by these circumstances. He knew their attachment to Schuyler, and suspected they were prejudicing the mind of Arnold against him; and this suspicion may have been the origin of a coolness and neglect which he soon evinced toward Arnold himself. These young officers, however, though devotedly attached to Schuyler from a knowledge of his generous character, were above any camp intrigue. Livingston was again looking forward with youthful ardor to a brush with the enemy; but regretted that his former chief would not be there to lead it. "Burgoyne," writes he to Schuyler exultingly, "is in such a situation that he can neither advance nor retire without fighting. A capital battle must soon be fought. I am chagrined to the soul when I think that another person will reap the fruits of your labors." *

Colonel Varick, equally eager, was afraid Burgoyne might be decamping. "His evening guns," writes he, "are seldom heard, and when heard, are very low in sound." †

The dense forests, in fact, which covered the country between the hostile armies, concealed their movements,

* MS. Letter to Schuyler. † Ibid.

and as Gates threw out no harassing parties, his information concerning the enemy was vague. Burgoyne, however, was diligently collecting all his forces from Skenesborough, Fort Anne and Fort George, and collecting provisions; he had completed a bridge by which he intended to pass the Hudson, and force his way to Albany, where he expected coöperation from below. Everything was conducted with as much silence and caution as possible. His troops paraded without beat of drum, and evening guns were discontinued. So stood matters on the 11th of September, when a report was circulated in the American camp, that Burgoyne was in motion, and that he had made a speech to his soldiers, telling them that the fleet had returned to Canada, and their only safety was to fight their way to New York.

As General Gates was to *receive* an attack, it was thought he ought to choose the ground where to receive it; Arnold, therefore, in company with Kosciuszko, the Polish engineer, reconnoitered the neighborhood in quest of a good camping-ground, and at length fixed upon a ridge of hills called Bemis's Heights, which Kosciuszko proceeded to fortify.

In the meantime Colonel Colburn was sent off with a small party to ascend the high hills on the east side of the Hudson, and watch the movements of the enemy with glasses from their summits, or from the tops of the trees. For three days he kept thus on the look-out, sending word from time to time to camp of all that he espied.

On the 11th there were the first signs of movement among Burgoyne's troops. On the 13th and 14th, they slowly passed over a bridge of boats, which they had thrown across the Hudson, and encamped near Fish Creek. Colburn counted eight hundred tents, including marquees. A mile in advance were fourteen more tents. The Hessians remained encamped on the eastern side of the river, but intervening woods concealed the number of their tents. There was not the usual stir of military animation in the camps. There were no evening nor morning guns.

On the 15th, both English and Hessian camps struck their tents, and loaded their baggage wagons. By twelve o'clock both began to march. Colburn neglected to notice the route taken by the Hessians; his attention was absorbed by the British, who made their way slowly and laboriously down the western side of the river, along a wretched road intersected by brooks and rivulets, the bridges over which Schuyler had broken down. The division had with it eighty-five baggage wagons and a great train of artillery; with two unwieldy twenty-four pounders, acting like drag-anchors. It was a silent, dogged march, without beat of drum, or spirit-stirring bray of trumpet. A body of light troops, new levies, and Indians, painted and decorated for war, struck off from the rest and disappeared in the forest, up Fish Creek. From the great silence observed by Burgoyne in his movements, and the care he took in keeping his men to-

gether, and allowing no straggling parties, Colonel Colburn apprehended that he meditated an attack. Having seen the enemy advance two miles on its march, therefore, he descended from the heights, and hastened to the American camp to make his report. A British prisoner, brought in soon afterwards, stated that Burgoyne had come to a halt about four miles distant.

On the following morning, the army was under arms at daylight; the enemy, however, remained encamped, repairing bridges in front, and sending down guard boats to reconnoiter; the Americans, therefore, went on to fortify their position. The ridge of hills called Bemis's Heights, rises abruptly from the narrow flats bordering the west side of the river. Kosciuszko had fortified the camp with intrenchments three-quarters of a mile in extent, having redoubts and batteries, which commanded the valley, and even the hills on the opposite side of the river; for the Hudson, in this upper part, is comparatively a narrow stream. From the foot of the heights, an intrenchment extended to the river, ending with a battery at the water edge, commanding a floating bridge.

The right wing of the army, under the immediate command of Gates, and composed of Glover's, Nixon's, and Patterson's brigades, occupied the brow of the hill nearest to the river, with the flats below.

The left wing, commanded by Arnold, was on the side of the camp furthest from the river, and distant from the

latter about three-quarters of a mile. It was composed of the New Hampshire brigade of General Poor, Pierre Van Courtlandt's and James Livingston's regiments of New York militia, the Connecticut militia, Morgan's riflemen, and Dearborn's infantry. The centre was composed of Massachusetts and New York troops.

Burgoyne gradually drew nearer to the camp, throwing out large parties of pioneers and workmen. The Americans disputed every step. A Hessian officer observes: "The enemy bristled up his hair, as we attempted to repair more bridges. At last, we had to do him the honor of sending out whole regiments to protect our workmen." *

It was Arnold who provoked this honor. At the head of fifteen hundred men he skirmished bravely with the superior force sent out against him, and retired with several prisoners.

Burgoyne now encamped about two miles from General Gates, disposing his army in two lines; the left on the river, the right extending at right angles to it, about six hundred yards, across the low grounds to a range of steep and rocky hills, occupied by the *élite;* a ravine formed by a rivulet from the hills passed in front of the camp. The low ground between the armies was cultivated; the hills were covered with woods, excepting three or four small openings and deserted farms. Beside the ravines

* Schlözer's *Briefwechsel.*

which fronted each camp there was a third one, midway between them, also at right angles to the river.*

On the morning of the 19th, General Gates received intelligence that the enemy were advancing in great force on his left. It was, in fact, their right wing, composed of the British line and led by Burgoyne in person. It was covered by the grenadiers and light infantry under General Fraser and Colonel Breyman, who kept along the high grounds on the right; while they, in turn, were covered in front and on the flanks by Indians, provincial royalists, and Canadians. The left wing and artillery were advancing at the same time, under Major-generals Phillips and Riedesel, along the great road and meadows by the river side, but they were retarded by the necessity of repairing broken bridges. It was the plan of Burgoyne, that the Canadians and Indians should attack the central outposts of the Americans, and draw their attention in that direction, while he and Fraser, making a circuit through the woods, should join forces and fall upon the rear of the American camp. As the dense forests hid them from each other, signal guns were to regulate their movements. Three, fired in succession, were to denote that all was ready, and be the signal for an attack in front, flank, and rear.

The American pickets, stationed along the ravine of Mill Creek, sent repeated accounts to General Gates of

* Wilkinson's *Memoirs*, i. 236.

the movements of the enemy; but he remained quiet in his camp, as if determined to await an attack. The American officers grew impatient. Arnold especially, impetuous by nature, urged repeatedly that a detachment should be sent forth to check the enemy in their advance and drive the Indians out of the woods. At length he succeeded in getting permission, about noon, to detach Morgan with his riflemen and Dearborn with his infantry from his division. They soon fell in with the Canadians and Indians, which formed the advance guard of the enemy's right, and attacking them with spirit, drove them in, or rather dispersed them. Morgan's riflemen, following up their advantage with too much eagerness, became likewise scattered, and a strong reinforcement of royalists arriving on the scene of action, the Americans, in their turn, were obliged to give way.

Other detachments now arrived from the American camp, led by Arnold, who attacked Fraser on his right, to check his attempt to get in the rear of the camp. Finding the position of Fraser too strong to be forced, he sent to head-quarters for reinforcements, but they were refused by Gates, who declared that no more should go; "he would not suffer his camp to be exposed."* The reason he gave was that it might be attacked by the enemy's left wing.

Arnold now made a rapid counter-march, and, his

* Colonel Varick to Schuyler. *Schuyler's Papers.*

movement being masked by the woods, suddenly attempted to turn Fraser's left. Here he came in full conflict with the British line, and threw himself upon it with a boldness and impetuosity that for a time threatened to break it, and cut the wings of the army asunder. The grenadiers and Breyman's riflemen hastened to its support. General Phillips broke his way through the woods with four pieces of artillery, and Riedesel came on with his heavy dragoons. Reinforcements came likewise to Arnold's assistance; his force, however, never exceeded three thousand men, and with these, for nearly four hours, he kept up a conflict, almost hand to hand, with the whole right wing of the British army. Part of the time the Americans had the advantage of fighting under the cover of a wood, so favorable to their militia and sharpshooters. Burgoyne ordered the woods to be cleared by the bayonet. His troops rushed forward in columns with a hurrah! The Americans kept within their intrenchments, and repeatedly repulsed them; but if they pursued their advantage, and advanced into open field, they were in their turn driven back.

Night alone put an end to the conflict, which the British acknowledged to have been the most obstinate and hardly fought they had ever experienced in America. Both parties claimed the victory. But, though the British remained on the field of battle, where they lay all night upon their arms, they had failed in their object; they had been assailed instead of being the assailants; while

the American troops had accomplished the purpose for which they had sallied forth; had checked the advance of the enemy, frustrated their plan of attack, and returned exulting to their camp. Their loss, in killed and wounded, was between three and four hundred, including several officers; that of the enemy upwards of five hundred.

Burgoyne gives an affecting picture of the situation of the ladies of rank already mentioned, during this action. Lady Harriet had been directed by her husband, Major Ackland, to follow the route of the artillery and baggage, which was not exposed. "At the time the action began," writes Burgoyne, "she found herself near a small uninhabited hut, where she alighted. When it was found the action was becoming general and bloody, the surgeons of the hospital took possession of the same place, as the most convenient for the first care of the wounded. Thus was the lady in hearing of one continual fire of cannon and musketry, for four hours together, with the presumption, from the post of her husband, at the head of the grenadiers, that he was in the most exposed part of the action. She had three female companions, the Baroness of Riedesel, and the wives of two British officers, Major Harnage and Lieutenant Reynell; but in the event their presence served but little for comfort. Major Harnage was soon brought to the surgeons very badly wounded; and in a little time after came intelligence that Lieutenant Reynell was shot dead. Im-

agination wants no helps to figure the state of the whole group."

Arnold was excessively indignant at Gates' withholding the reinforcements he had required in the heat of the action; had they been furnished, he said, he might have severed the line of the enemy and gained a complete victory. He was urgent to resume the action on the succeeding morning, and follow up the advantage he had gained, but Gates declined, to his additional annoyance. He attributed the refusal to pique or jealousy, but Gates subsequently gave as a reason the great deficiency of powder and ball in the camp, which was known only to himself, and which he kept secret until a supply was sent from Albany.

Burgoyne now strengthened his position with intrenchments and batteries, part of them across the meadows which bordered the river, part on the brow of the heights which commanded them. The Americans likewise extended and strengthened their line of breastworks on the left of the camp; the right was already unassailable. The camps were within gunshot, but with ravines and woods between them.

Washington's predictions of the effect to be produced by Morgan's riflemen approached fulfillment. The Indians, dismayed at the severe treatment experienced from these veteran bush fighters, were disappearing from the British camp. The Canadians and royal provincials, "mere trimmers," as Burgoyne called them, were desert-

ing in great numbers, and he had no confidence in those who remained.

His situation was growing more and more critical. On the 21st, he heard shouts in the American camp, and in a little while their cannon thundered a *feu de joie*. News had been received from General Lincoln, that a detachment of New England troops under Colonel Brown had surprised the carrying-place, mills, and French lines at Ticonderoga, captured an armed sloop, gunboats, and bateaux, made three hundred prisoners, beside releasing one hundred American captives, and were laying siege to Fort Independence.*

Fortunately for Burgoyne, while affairs were darkening in the North, a ray of hope dawned from the South. While the shouts from the American camp were yet ringing in his ears, came a letter in cipher from Sir Henry Clinton, dated the 12th of September, announcing his intention in about ten days to attack the forts in the Highlands of the Hudson.

Burgoyne sent back the messenger the same night, and despatched, moreover, two officers in disguise, by different routes, all bearing messages informing Sir Henry of his perilous situation, and urging a diversion that might oblige General Gates to detach a part of his army; adding, that he would endeavor to maintain his present position, and await favorable events until the 12th of October.†

* Colonel Varick to Schuyler. *Schuyler's Papers.*

† Burgoyne to Lord George Germaine.

The jealousy of Gates had been intensely excited at finding the whole credit of the late affair given by the army to Arnold: in his despatches to government he made no mention of him. This increased the schism between them. Wilkinson, the adjutant-general, who was a sycophantic adherent of Gates, pandered to his pique by withdrawing from Arnold's division Morgan's rifle corps and Dearborn's light infantry, its arms of strength, which had done such brilliant service in the late affair: they were henceforth to be subject to no order, but those from head-quarters.

Arnold called on Gates on the evening of the 22d, to remonstrate. High words passed between them, and matters came to an open rupture. Gates, in his heat, told Arnold that he did not consider him a major-general, he having sent his resignation to Congress; that he had never given him the command of any division of the army; that General Lincoln would arrive in a day or two, and then he would have no further occasion for him, and would give him a pass to go to Philadelphia, whenever he chose.*

Arnold returned to his quarters in a rage, and wrote a note to Gates requesting the proffered permit to depart for Philadelphia; by the time he received it his ire had cooled and he had changed his mind. He determined to remain in camp and abide the anticipated battle.

* Col. Livingston to Schuyler. *Schuyler Papers.*

Lincoln, in the meantime, arrived in advance of his troops; which soon followed to the amount of two thousand. Part of the troops, detached by him under Colonel Brown, were besieging Ticonderoga and Fort Independence. Colonel Brown himself, with part of his detachment, had embarked on Lake George in an armed schooner, and a squadron of captured gunboats and bateaux, and was threatening the enemy's deposit of baggage and heavy artillery at Diamond Island. The toils so skillfully spread were encompassing Burgoyne more and more; the gates of Canada were closing behind him.

A morning or two after Lincoln's arrival, Arnold observed him giving some directions in the left division, and quickly inquired whether he was doing so by order of General Gates; being answered in the negative, he observed that the left division belonged to him; and that he believed his (Lincoln's) proper station was on the right, and that of General Gates ought to be in the centre. He requested him to mention this to General Gates, and have the matter adjusted.

"He is determined," writes Varick, "not to suffer any one to interfere in his division, and says it will be death to any officer who does so in action." Arnold, in fact, was in a bellicose vein, and rather blustered about the camp. Gates, he said, could not refuse him his command, and he would not yield it now that a battle was expected.

Some of the general officers and colonels of his division proposed to make him an address, thanking him for his

past services, particularly in the late action, and entreating him to stay. Others suggested that the general officers should endeavor to produce a reconciliation between the jarring parties. Lincoln was inclined to do so; but, in the end, neither measure was taken through fear of offending General Gates. In the meantime Arnold remained in camp, treated, he said, as a cipher, and never consulted; though when Congress had sent him to that department, at the request of General Washington, they expected the commander would at least have taken his opinion on public matters.

On the 30th, he gave vent to his feelings in an indignant letter to Gates. "Notwithstanding I have reason to think your treatment proceeds from a spirit of jealousy," writes he, "and that I have everything to fear from the malice of my enemies, conscious of my own innocency and integrity, I am determined to sacrifice my feelings, present peace, and quiet, to the public good, and continue in the army at this critical juncture, when my country needs every support.

"I hope," concludes he, "you will not impute this hint to a wish to command the army, or to outshine you, when I assure you it proceeds from my zeal for the cause of my country, in which I expect to rise or fall." *

All this time the Americans were harassing the British camp with frequent night alarms and attacks on its pickets and outposts.

* Gates' *Papers*, N. Y. Hist. Lib.

"From the 20th of September to the 7th of October," writes Burgoyne, "the armies were so near, that not a night passed without firing, and sometimes concerted attacks upon our advanced pickets. I do not believe either officer or soldier ever slept in that interval without his clothes; or that any general officer or commander of a regiment passed a single night, without being upon his legs occasionally at different hours, and constantly an hour before daylight."*

Still Burgoyne kept up a resolute mien, telling his soldiers, in a harangue, that he was determined to leave his bones on the field, or force his way to Albany. He yet clung to the hope, that Sir Henry Clinton might operate in time to relieve him from his perilous position.

We will now cast a look toward New York, and ascertain the cause of Sir Henry's delay in his anxiously expected operations on the Hudson.

* *Burgoyne's Expedition*, p. 166.

CHAPTER XXI.

PREPARATIONS OF SIR HENRY CLINTON.—STATE OF THE HIGHLAND DEFENSES.—PUTNAM ALARMED.—ADVANCE OF THE ARMAMENT UP THE HUDSON.—PLAN OF SIR HENRY CLINTON.—PEEKSKILL THREATENED.—PUTNAM DECEIVED.—SECRET MARCH OF THE ENEMY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS.—FORTS MONTGOMERY AND CLINTON OVERPOWERED.—NARROW ESCAPE OF THE COMMANDERS.—CONFLAGRATION AND EXPLOSION OF THE AMERICAN FRIGATES.—RALLYING EFFORTS OF PUTNAM AND GOVERNOR CLINTON.—THE SPY AND THE SILVER BULLET.—ESOPUS BURNT.—RAVAGING PROGRESS OF THE ENEMY UP THE HUDSON.

THE expedition of Sir Henry Clinton had awaited the arrival of reinforcements from Europe, which were slowly crossing the ocean in Dutch bottoms. At length they arrived, after a three months' voyage, and now there was a stir of warlike preparation at New York; the streets were full of soldiery, the bay full of ships, and water craft of all kinds were plying about the harbor. Between three and four thousand men were to be embarked on board of ships of war, armed galleys, and flat-bottomed boats. A southern destination was given out, but shrewd observers surmised the real one.

The defenses of the Highlands, on which the security

of the Hudson depended, were at this time weakly garrisoned; some of the troops having been sent off to reinforce the armies on the Delaware and in the North. Putnam, who had the general command of the Highlands, had but eleven hundred continental and four hundred militia troops with him at Peekskill, his head-quarters. There was a feeble garrison at Fort Independence, in the vicinity of Peekskill, to guard the public stores and workshops at Continental Village.

The Highland forts, Clinton, Montgomery, and Constitution, situated among the mountains and forming their main defense, were no better garrisoned, and George Clinton, who had the command of them, and who was in a manner the champion of the Highlands, was absent from his post, attending the State Legislature at Kingston (Esopus), in Ulster County, in his capacity of governor.

There were patriot eyes in New York to watch the course of events, and patriot boats on the river to act as swift messengers. On the 29th of September, Putnam wrote to his coadjutor the governor: "I have received intelligence on which I can fully depend, that the enemy had received a reinforcement at New York last Thursday, of about three thousand British and foreign troops; that General Clinton has called in guides who belong about Croton River; has ordered hard bread to be baked; that the troops are called from Paulus Hook to King's Bridge, and the whole troops are now under marching orders.

I think it highly probable the designs of the enemy are against the posts of the Highlands, or of some part of the counties of Westchester or Dutchess." Under these circumstances he begged a reinforcement of the militia to enable him to maintain his post, and intimated a wish for the personal assistance and counsel of the governor. In a postscript he adds: "The ships are drawn up in the river, and I believe nothing prevents them from paying us an immediate visit, but a contrary wind."

On receiving this letter the governor forthwith hastened to his post in the Highlands, with such militia force as he could collect. We have heretofore spoken of his Highland citadel, Fort Montgomery, and of the obstructions of chain, boom, and chevaux-de-frise between it and the opposite promontory of Anthony's Nose, with which it had been hoped to barricade the Hudson. The chain had repeatedly given way under the pressure of the tide, but the obstructions were still considered efficient, and were protected by the guns of the fort, and of two frigates and two armed galleys anchored above.

Fort Clinton had subsequently been erected within rifle shot of Fort Montgomery, to occupy ground which commanded it. A deep ravine and stream called Peploeps Kill, intervened between the two forts, across which there was a bridge. The governor had his head-quarters in Fort Montgomery, which was the northern and largest fort, but its works were unfinished. His brother James had charge of Fort Clinton, which was complete. The

whole force to garrison the associate forts did not exceed six hundred men, chiefly militia, but they had the veteran Colonel Lamb of the artillery with them, who had served in Canada, and a company of his artillerists was distributed in the two forts.

The armament of Sir Henry Clinton, which had been waiting for a wind, set sail in the course of a day or two and stood up the Hudson, dogged by American swift-rowing whale-boats. Late at night on the 4th of October came a barge across the river, from Peekskill to Fort Montgomery, bearing a letter from Putnam to the governor. "This morning," writes he, "we had information from our guard boats, that there were two ships of war, three tenders, and a large number of flat-bottomed boats, coming up the river. They proceeded up as far as Tarrytown, where they landed their men. This evening they were followed by one large man-of-war, five topsail vessels, and a large number of small craft. I have sent off parties to examine their route and harass their march, if prudent. By information from several different quarters, we have reason to believe they intend for this post. They are now making up, as we hear, for the Croton Bridge." *

The landing of the troops at Tarrytown was a mere feint on the part of Sir Henry to distract the attention of the Americans; after marching a few miles into the coun-

* *Correspondence of the Revolution.* Sparks, ii. 537.

try, they returned and reëmbarked; the armament continued across the Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay to Verplanck's Point, where, on the 15th, Sir Henry landed with three thousand men about eight miles below Peekskill.

Putnam drew back to the hills in the rear of the village, to prepare for the expected attack, and sent off to Governor Clinton for all the troops he could spare. So far the maneuvers of Sir Henry Clinton had been successful. It was his plan to threaten an attack on Peekskill and Fort Independence, and, when he had drawn the attention of the American commanders to that quarter, to land troops on the western shore of the Hudson, below the Dunderberg (Thunder Hill), make a rapid march through the defiles behind that mountain to the rear of Forts Montgomery and Clinton, come down on them by surprise, and carry them by a *coup de main*.

Accordingly at an early hour of the following morning, taking advantage of a thick fog, he crossed with two thousand men to Stony Point, on the west shore of the river, leaving about a thousand men, chiefly royalists, at Verplanck's Point, to keep up a threatening aspect towards Peekskill. Three frigates, also, were to stand up what is called the Devil's Horse Race into Peekskill Bay, and station themselves within cannon-shot of Fort Independence.

The crossing of the troops had been dimly descried from Peekskill, but they were supposed to be a mere detachment from the main body on a maraud.

Having accomplished his landing, Sir Henry, conducted by a tory guide, set out on a forced and circuitous march of several miles by rugged defiles, round the western base of the Dunderberg. At the entrance of the pass he left a small force to guard it, and keep up his communication with the ships. By eight o'clock in the morning he had effected his march round the Dunderberg, and halted on the northern side in a ravine, between it and a conical mount called Bear Hill. The possibility of an enemy's approach by this pass had been noticed by Washington in reconnoitering the Highlands, and he had mentioned it in his instructions to Generals Greene and Knox, when they were sent to make their military survey, but they considered it impracticable, from the extreme difficulty of the mountain passes. It is in defiance of difficulties, however, that surprises are apt to be attempted, and the most signal have been achieved in the face of seeming impossibilities.

In the ravine between the Dunderberg and Bear Hill, Sir Henry divided his forces. One division, nine hundred strong, led by Lieutenant-colonel Campbell, was to make a circuit through the forest round the western side of Bear Hill, so as to gain the rear of Fort Montgomery. After Sir Henry had allowed sufficient time for them to make the circuit, he was to proceed with the other division down the ravine, towards the river, turn to the left along a narrow strip of land between the Hudson and a small lake called Sinipink Pond, which lay at the foot

of Bear Hill, and advance upon Fort Clinton. Both forts were to be attacked at the same time.

The detachment under Campbell set off in high spirits; it was composed partly of royalists, led by Colonel Beverly Robinson of New York, partly of Emerick's chasseurs, and partly of grenadiers, under Lord Rawdon, then about twenty-four years of age, who had already seen service at Bunker's Hill. With him went Count Gabrouski, a Polish nobleman, aide-de-camp to Sir Henry Clinton, but who had sought to accompany his friend, Lord Rawdon, in this wild mountain scramble. Everything thus far had been conducted with celerity and apparent secrecy, and complete surprise of both forts was anticipated. Sir Henry had indeed outwitted one of the guardians of the Highlands, but the other was aware of his designs. Governor Clinton, on receiving intelligence of ships of war coming up the Hudson, had sent scouts beyond the Dunderberg to watch their movements. Early on the present morning, word had been brought him that forty boats were landing a large force at Stony Point. He now, in his turn, apprehended an attack, and sent to Putnam for reinforcements, preparing in the meantime, to make such defense as his scanty means afforded.

A lieutenant was sent out with thirty men from Fort Clinton, to proceed along the river-road and reconnoiter. He fell in with the advance guard of Sir Henry Clinton's division, and retreated skirmishing to the fort. A larger

detachment was sent out to check the approach of the enemy on this side; while sixty men, afterwards increased to a hundred, took post with a brass field-piece in the Bear Hill defile.

It was a narrow and rugged pass, bordered by shagged forests. As Campbell and his division came pressing forward, they were checked by the discharge of fire-arms and of the brass field-piece, which swept the steep defile. The British troops then filed off on each side into the woods, to surround the Americans. The latter, finding it impossible to extricate their field-piece in the rugged pass, spiked it, and retreated into the fort, under cover of the fire of a twelve-pounder, with which Lamb had posted himself on the crest of a hill.

Sir Henry Clinton had met with equally obstinate opposition in his approach to Fort Clinton; the narrow strip of land between Lake Sinipink and the Hudson, along which he advanced, being fortified by an abatis. By four o'clock the Americans were driven within their works, and both forts were assailed. The defense was desperate: for Governor Clinton was a hard fighter, and he was still in hopes of reinforcements from Putnam; not knowing that the messenger he sent to him had turned traitor and deserted to the enemy.

About five o'clock, he was summoned to surrender in five minutes, to prevent the effusion of blood: the reply was a refusal. About ten minutes afterwards, there was a general attack upon both forts. It was resisted with

obstinate spirit. The action continued until dusk. The ships under Commodore Hotham approached near enough to open an irregular fire upon the forts, and upon the vessels anchored above the chevaux-de-frise. The latter returned the fire; and the flash and roar of their cannonry in the gathering darkness and among the echoes of the mountains increased the terrors of the strife. The works, however, were too extensive to be manned by the scanty garrisons; they were entered by different places and carried at the point of the bayonet; the Americans fought desperately from one redoubt to another; some were slain, some taken prisoners, and some escaped under cover of the night to the river or the mountains. "The garrison," writes Clinton, significantly, "had to fight their way out as many as could, as we determined not to surrender."

His brother James was saved from a deadly thrust of a bayonet, by a garrison orderly-book in his pocket; but he received a flesh-wound in the thigh. He slid down a precipice, one hundred feet high, into the ravine between the forts, and escaped to the woods. The governor leaped down the rocks to the river side, where a boat was putting off with a number of the fugitives. They turned back to receive him, but he generously refused to endanger their safety, as the boat was already loaded to the gunwale. It was only on receiving assurance of its being capable of bearing his additional weight, that he consented to enter. The boat crossed the Hudson in safety, and before mid-

night the governor was with Putnam, at Continental Village, concerting further measures.

Putnam had been completely outmanœuvered by Sir Henry Clinton. He had continued until late in the morning, in the belief that Peekskill and Fort Independence were to be the objects of attack. His pickets and scouts could not ascertain the number of the enemy remaining on the east side of the river; a large fire near Stony Point made him think the troops which had crossed were merely burning storehouses; while ships, galleys, and flat-bottomed boats seemed preparing to land forces at Fort Independence and Peekskill. In the course of the morning he sallied forth with Brigadier-general Parsons, to reconnoiter the ground near the enemy. After their return they were alarmed, he says, by "a very heavy and hot firing both of small arms and cannon, at Fort Montgomery," which must have made a tremendous uproar among the echoes of the Dunderberg. Aware of the real point of danger, he immediately detached five hundred men to reinforce the garrison. They had six miles to march along the eastern shore, and then to cross the river; before they could do so the fate of the forts was decided.

British historians acknowledged that the valor and resolution displayed by the Americans in the defense of these forts were in no instance exceeded during the war; their loss in killed, wounded and missing, was stated at two hundred and fifty, a large proportion of the number

engaged. Their gallant defense awakened no generous sentiment in the victors. "As the soldiers," observes the British writer, "were much irritated, as well by the fatigue they had undergone and the opposition they met, as by the loss of some brave and favorite officers, the slaughter of the enemy was considerable."*

Among the officers thus deplored, and bloodily revenged, was Colonel Campbell, who commanded the detachment. At his fall the command devolved on Colonel Beverly Robinson of the American loyalists. Another officer slain was Major Grant of the New York volunteers. Count Gabrouski, the Polish aide-de-camp of Sir Henry Clinton, had gallantly signalized himself by the side of his friend, Lord Rawdon, who led the grenadiers in storming Fort Montgomery. The count received his death wound at the foot of the ramparts. Giving his sword to a grenadier, "Take this sword to Lord Rawdon," said he, "and tell him the owner died like a soldier."†

On the capture of the forts, the American frigates and galleys stationed for the protection of the chevaux-de-frise slipped their cables, made all sail, and endeavored to escape up the river. The wind, however, proved adverse; there was danger of their falling into the hands of the enemy; the crews, therefore, set them on fire and abandoned them. As every sail was set, the vessels, we are told, were soon "magnificent pyramids of fire;" the

* *Civil War in America*, vol. i. p. 311.

† Steadman, vol. i. p. 364.

surrounding mountains were lit up by the glare, and a train of ruddy light gleamed along the river. They were in a part of the Highlands famous for its echoes: as the flames gradually reached the loaded cannon, their thundering reports were multiplied and prolonged along the rocky shores. The vessels at length blew up with tremendous explosions, and all again was darkness." *

On the following morning, the chevaux-de-frise and other obstructions between Fort Montgomery and Anthony's Nose were cleared away: the Americans evacuated Forts Independence and Constitution, and a free passage up the Hudson was open for the British ships. Sir Henry Clinton proceeded no further in person, but left the rest of the enterprise to be accomplished by Sir James Wallace and General Vaughan, with a flying squadron of light frigates, and a considerable detachment of troops.

Putnam had retreated to a pass in the mountains, on the east side of the river, near Fishkill, having removed as much of the stores and baggage as possible from the post he had abandoned. The old general was somewhat mortified at having been outwitted by the enemy, but endeavored to shift the responsibility. In a letter to Washington (October 8th), he writes: "I have repeatedly informed your Excellency of the enemy's design against this post; but, from some motive or other you

* Steadman, vol. i. p. 364.

always differed from me in opinion. As this conjecture of mine has for once proved right, I cannot omit informing you, that my real and sincere opinion is, that they now mean to join General Burgoyne with the utmost despatch. Governor Clinton is exerting himself in collecting the militia of this State. Brigadier-general Parsons I have sent off to forward in the Connecticut militia, which are now arriving in great numbers. I therefore hope and trust, that in the course of a few days I shall be able to oppose the progress of the enemy."

He had concerted with Governor Clinton that they should move to the northward with their forces, along the opposite shores of the Hudson, endeavoring to keep pace with the enemy's ships and cover the country from their attacks.

The governor was in the neighborhood of New Windsor, just above the Highlands, where he had posted himself to rally what he termed his "broken but brave troops," and to call out the militia of Ulster and Orange. "I am persuaded," writes he, "if the militia will join me, we can save the country from destruction, and defeat the enemy's design of assisting their Northern army." The militia, however, were not as prompt as usual in answering to the call of their popular and brave-hearted governor. "They are well disposed," writes he, "but anxious about the immediate safety of their respective families (who, for many miles, are yet moving further from the river); they come in the morning and return in the even-

ing, and I never know when I have them, or what my strength is." *

On the 9th, two persons coming from Fort Montgomery were arrested by his guards, and brought before him for examination. One was much agitated, and was observed to put something hastily into his mouth and swallow it. An emetic was administered, and brought up a small silver bullet. Before he could be prevented he swallowed it again. On his refusing a second emetic, the governor threatened to have him hanged and his body opened. The threat produced the bullet in the preceding manner. It was oval in form and hollow, with a screw in the centre, and contained a note from Sir Henry Clinton to Burgoyne, written on a slip of thin paper, and dated (October 8th) from Fort Montgomery. "*Nous y voici* [here we are], and nothing between us and Gates. I sincerely hope this little success of ours will facilitate your operations." †

The bearer of the letter was tried and convicted as a spy, and sentenced to be hanged.

The enemy's light-armed vessels were now making their way up the river; landing marauding parties occasionally to make depredations.

As soon as the governor could collect a little force, he

* Letter to the Council of Safety. *Journal of Provincial Congress*, vol. i. 1064.

† Governor Clinton to the N. Y. Council of Safety. *Journal of Provincial Congress.*

pressed forward to protect Kingston (Esopus), the seat of the State legislature. The enemy in the meantime landed from their ships, routed about one hundred and fifty militia collected to oppose them, marched to the village, set fire to it in every part, consuming great quantities of stores collected there, and then retreated to their ships.

Governor Clinton was two hours too late. He beheld the flames from a distance; and having brought with him the spy, the bearer of the silver bullet, he hanged him on an apple-tree in sight of the burning village.

Having laid Kingston, the seat of the State government, in ashes, the enemy proceeded in their ravages, destroying the residences of conspicuous patriots at Rhinebeck, Livingston Manor, and elsewhere, and among others the mansion of the widow of the brave General Montgomery: trusting to close their desolating career by a triumphant junction with Burgoyne at Albany.

CHAPTER XXII.

SCARCITY IN THE BRITISH CAMP.—GATES BIDES HIS TIME.—FORAGING MOVEMENT OF BURGOYNE.—BATTLE OF THE 7TH OCTOBER.—ROUT OF THE BRITISH AND HESSIANS.—SITUATION OF THE BARONESS RIEDESEL AND LADY HARRIET ACKLAND DURING THE BATTLE.—DEATH OF GEN. FRASER.—HIS FUNERAL.—NIGHT RETREAT OF THE BRITISH.—EXPEDITION OF LADY HARRIET ACKLAND.—DESPERATE SITUATION OF BURGOYNE AT SARATOGA.—CAPITULATION.—SURRENDER.—CONDUCT OF THE AMERICAN TROOPS.—SCENES IN THE CAMP.—GALLANT COURTESY OF SCHUYLER TO THE BARONESS RIEDESEL.—HIS MAGNANIMOUS CONDUCT TOWARD BURGOYNE.—RETURN OF THE BRITISH DOWN THE HUDSON.

WHILE Sir Henry Clinton had been thundering in the Highlands, Burgoyne and his army had been wearing out hope within their intrenchments, vigilantly watched, but unassailed by the Americans. They became impatient even of this impunity. "The enemy, though he can bring four times more soldiers against us, shows no desire to make an attack," writes a Hessian officer.*

Arnold, too, was chafing in the camp, and longing for a chance, as usual, "to right himself" by his sword. In a letter to Gates he tries to goad him on. "I think it my

* Schlözer's *Briefwechsel.*

duty (which nothing shall deter me from doing) to acquaint you, the army are clamorous for action. The militia (who compose great part of the army) are already threatening to go home. One fortnight's inaction will, I make no doubt, lessen your army by sickness and desertion, at least four thousand men. In which time the enemy may be reinforced, and make good their retreat.

"I have reason to think, from intelligence since received, that, had we improved the 20th of September, it might have ruined the enemy. That is past; let me entreat you to improve the present time."

Gates was not to be goaded into action; he saw the desperate situation of Burgoyne, and bided his time. "Perhaps," writes he, "despair may dictate to him to risk all upon one throw; he is an old gamester, and in his time has seen all chances. I will endeavor to be ready to prevent his good fortune, and, if possible, secure my own." *

On the 7th of October, but four or five days remained of the time Burgoyne had pledged himself to await the coöperation of Sir Henry Clinton. He now determined to make a grand movement on the left of the American camp, to discover whether he could force a passage, should it be necessary to advance, or dislodge it from its position, should he have to retreat. Another object was to cover a forage of the army, which was suffering from the great scarcity.

* Letter to Gov. Clinton. Gates' *Papers.*

For this purpose fifteen hundred of his best troops, with two twelve-pounders, two howitzers and six six-pounders, were to be led by himself, seconded by Major-generals Phillips and Riedesel, and Brigadier-general Fraser. "No equal number of men," say the British accounts, "were ever better commanded; and it would have been difficult indeed, to have matched the men with an equal number." *

On leaving his camp, Burgoyne committed the guard of it on the high grounds to Brigadier-generals Hamilton and Specht, and of the redoubts on the low grounds near the river, to Brigadier-general Gall.

Forming his troops within three-quarters of a mile of the left of the Americans, though covered from their sight by the forest, he sent out a corps of rangers, provincials, and Indians, to skulk through the woods, get in their rear, and give them an alarm at the time the attack took place in front.

The movement, though carried on behind the screen of forests, was discovered. In the afternoon the advanced guard of the American centre beat to arms; the alarm was repeated throughout the line. Gates ordered his officers to their alarm posts, and sent forth Wilkinson, the adjutant-general, to inquire the cause. From a rising ground in an open place he descried the enemy in force, their foragers busy in a field of wheat, the officers recon-

* *Civil War in America*, i. 302.

noitering the left wing of the camp with telescopes from the top of a cabin.

Returning to the camp, Wilkinson reported the position and movements of the enemy; that their front was open, their flanks rested on woods, under cover of which they might be attacked, and their right was skirted by a height: that they were reconnoitering the left, and he thought offered battle.

"Well, then," replied Gates, "order out Morgan to begin the game."

A plan of attack was soon arranged. Morgan with his riflemen and a body of infantry was sent to make a circuit through the woods, and get possession of the heights on the right of the enemy, while General Poor with his brigade of New York and New Hampshire troops, and a part of Learned's brigade, were to advance against the enemy's left. Morgan was to make an attack on the heights as soon as he should hear the fire opened below.

Burgoyne now drew out his troops in battle array. The grenadiers, under Major Ackland, with the artillery, under Major Williams, formed the left, and were stationed on a rising ground, with a rivulet called Mill Creek in front. Next to them were the Hessians, under Riedesel, and British, under Phillips, forming the centre. The light infantry, under Lord Balcarras, formed the extreme right; having in the advance a detachment of five hundred picked men, under General Fraser, ready to flank the Americans as soon as they should be attacked in front.

He had scarce made these arrangements, when he was astonished and confounded by a thundering of artillery on his left, and a rattling fire of rifles on the woody heights on his right. The troops under Poor advanced steadily up the ascent where Ackland's grenadiers and Williams' artillery were stationed; received their fire, and then rushed forward. Ackland's grenadiers received the first brunt, but it extended along the line, as detachment after detachment arrived, and was carried on with inconceivable fury. The Hessian artillerists spoke afterwards of the heedlessness with which the Americans rushed upon the cannon, while they were discharging grapeshot. The artillery was repeatedly taken and retaken, and at length remained in possession of the Americans, who turned it upon its former owners. Major Ackland was wounded in both legs, and taken prisoner. Major Williams of the artillery was also captured. The headlong impetuosity of the attack confounded the regular tacticians. Much of this has been ascribed to the presence and example of Arnold. That daring officer, who had lingered in the camp in expectation of a fight, was exasperated at having no command assigned him. On hearing the din of battle, he could restrain no longer his warlike impulse, but threw himself on his horse and sallied forth. Gates saw him issuing from the camp. "He'll do some rash thing!" cried he, and sent his aide-de-camp, Major Armstrong, to call him back. Arnold surmised his errand and evaded it. Putting spurs to his

horse, he dashed into the scene of action, and was received with acclamation. Being the superior officer in the field his orders were obeyed of course. Putting himself at the head of the troops of Learned's brigade, he attacked the Hessians in the enemy's centre, and broke them with repeated charges. Indeed, for a time his actions seemed to partake of frenzy; riding hither and thither, brandishing his sword, and cheering on the men to acts of desperation. In one of his paroxysms of excitement, he struck and wounded an American officer on the head with his sword, without, as he afterwards declared, being conscious of the act. Wilkinson asserts that he was partly intoxicated; but Arnold needed only his own irritated pride and the smell of gunpowder to rouse him to acts of madness.

Morgan, in the meantime, was harassing the enemy's right wing with an incessant fire of small-arms, and preventing it from sending any assistance to the centre. General Fraser with his chosen corps, for some time rendered great protection to this wing. Mounted on an iron-gray charger, his uniform of a field-officer made him a conspicuous object for Morgan's sharpshooters. One bullet cut the crupper of his horse, another grazed his mane. "You are singled out, general," said his aide-de-camp, "and had better shift your ground." "My duty forbids me to fly from danger," was the reply. A moment afterwards he was shot down by a marksman posted in a tree. Two grenadiers bore him to the camp. His

fall was a death-blow to his corps. The arrival on the field of a large reinforcement of New York troops under General Ten Broeck, completed the confusion. Burgoyne saw that the field was lost, and now only thought of saving his camp. The troops nearest to the lines were ordered to throw themselves within them, while Generals Phillips and Riedesel covered the retreat of the main body, which was in danger of being cut off. The artillery was abandoned, all the horses, and most of the men who had so bravely defended it, having been killed. The troops, though hard pressed, retired in good order. Scarcely had they entered the camp when it was stormed with great fury; the Americans, with Arnold at their head, rushing to the lines under a severe discharge of grape-shot and small-arms. Lord Balcarras defended the intrenchments bravely; the action was fierce, and well sustained on either side. After an ineffectual attempt to make his way into the camp in this quarter at the point of the bayonet, Arnold spurred his horse toward the right flank of the camp occupied by the German reserve, where Lieutenant-colonel Brooks was making a general attack with a Massachusetts regiment. Here, with a part of a platoon, he forced his way into a sally-port, but a shot from the retreating Hessians killed his horse, and wounded him in the same leg which had received a wound before Quebec. He was borne off from the field, but not until the victory was complete; for the Germans retreated from the works, leaving on the field their

brave defender, Lieutenant-colonel Breyman, mortally wounded.

The night was now closing in. The victory of the Americans was decisive. They had routed the enemy, killed and wounded a great number, made many prisoners, taken their field-artillery, and gained possession of a part of their works which laid open the right and the rear of their camp. They lay all night on their arms, within half a mile of the scene of action, prepared to renew the assault upon the camp in the morning. Affecting scenes had occurred in the enemy's camp during this deadly conflict.

In the morning previous to the battle, the Baroness De Riedesel had breakfasted with her husband in the camp. Generals Burgoyne, Phillips, and Fraser were to dine with her husband and herself, in a house in the neighborhood where she and her children were quartered. She observed much movement in the camp, but was quieted by the assurance that it was to be a mere reconnoissance. On her way home she met a number of Indians, painted and decorated and armed with guns, and shouting War! War! Her fears were awakened, and scarce had she reached home when she heard the rattling of fire-arms and the thundering of artillery. The din increased, and soon became so terrible that she "was more dead than alive." About one o'clock came one of the generals who were to have dined with her—poor General Fraser—brought upon a handbarrow, mortally wounded. "The table," writes she, "which was already

prepared for dinner, was immediately removed, and a bed placed in its stead for the general. I sat terrified and trembling in a corner. The noise grew more alarming, and I was in a continual agony and tremor, while thinking that my husband might soon, also, be brought in, wounded like General Fraser. That poor general said to the surgeon, 'Tell me the truth, is there no hope?'—There was none. Prayers were read, after which he desired that General Burgoyne should be requested to have him buried on the next day at six o'clock in the evening, on a hill where a breastwork had been constructed."

Lady Harriet Ackland was in a tent near by. News came to her that her husband was mortally wounded and taken prisoner. She was in an agony of distress. The baroness endeavored to persuade her that his wound might not be dangerous, and advised her to ask permission to join him. She divided the night between soothing attentions to Lady Harriet, and watchful care of her children who were asleep, but who she feared might disturb the poor dying general. Towards morning, thinking his agony approaching, she wrapped them in blankets and retired with them into the entrance hall. Courteous even in death, the general sent her several messages to beg her pardon for the trouble he thought he was giving her. At eight o'clock in the morning he expired.*

Burgoyne had shifted his position during the night, to

* Riedesel's *Memoirs.*

heights about a mile to the north, close to the river, and covered in front by a ravine. Early in the morning, the Americans took possession of the camp which he had abandoned. A random fire of artillery and small-arms was kept up on both sides during the day. The British sharpshooters stationed in the ravine did some execution, and General Lincoln was wounded in the leg while reconnoitering. Gates, however, did not think it advisable to force a desperate enemy when in a strong position, at the expense of a prodigal waste of blood. He took all measures to cut off his retreat and insure a surrender. General Fellows, with 1,400 men, had already been sent to occupy the high ground east of the Hudson opposite Saratoga Ford. Other detachments were sent higher up the river in the direction of Lake George.

Burgoyne saw that nothing was left for him but a prompt and rapid retreat to Saratoga, yet in this he was delayed by a melancholy duty of friendship; it was to attend the obsequies of the gallant Fraser, who, according to his dying request, was to be interred at six o'clock in the evening, within a redoubt which had been constructed on a hill.

Between sunset and dark, his body was borne to the appointed place by grenadiers of his division, followed by the generals and their staffs. The Americans seeing indistinctly what, in the twilight, appeared to be a movement of troops up the hill and in the redoubt, pointed their artillery in that direction. "Cannon balls flew around

and above the assembled mourners," writes the Baroness Riedesel, who was a spectator from a distance. "Many cannon balls flew close by me, but my whole attention was engaged by the funeral scene, where I saw my husband exposed to imminent danger. This, indeed, was not a moment to be apprehensive for my own safety. General Gates protested afterwards, that had he known what was going on, he would have stopped the firing immediately."

We have the scene still more feelingly described by Burgoyne.

"The incessant cannonade during the ceremony; the steady attitude and unaltered voice with which the chaplain officiated, though frequently covered with dust which the shot threw up on all sides of him; the mute, but expressive mixture of sensibility and indignation upon every countenance; these objects will remain to the last of life upon the mind of every man who was present. The growing darkness added to the scenery, and the whole marked a character of that juncture which would make one of the finest subjects for the pencil of a master that the field ever exhibited. To the canvas and to the faithful page of a more important historian, gallant friend! I consign thy memory. There may thy talents, thy manly virtues, their progress and their period, find due distinction: and long may they survive, long after the frail record of my pen shall be forgotten!"

* Riedesel's *Memoirs*, p. 171.

General Fraser was well worthy of this eulogium. He was the most popular officer of the army, and one of the most efficient. He was one in whom Burgoyne reposed the most implicit confidence, and deeply must it have added to his gloom of mind at this dark hour of his fortunes, to have this his friend and counselor and brother in arms shot down at his side.

"The reflections arising from these scenes," writes he, "gave place to the perplexities of the night. A defeated army was to retreat from an enemy flushed with success, much superior in front, and occupying strong posts in the country behind. We were equally liable upon that march to be attacked in front, flank, or rear."

Preparations had been made to decamp immediately after the funeral, and at nine o'clock at night the retreat commenced. Large fires had been lighted, and many tents were left standing to conceal the movement. The hospital, in which were about three hundred sick and wounded, was abandoned, as were likewise several bateaux, laden with baggage and provisions.

It was a dismal retreat. The rain fell in torrents; the roads were deep and broken, and the horses weak and half-starved from want of forage. At daybreak there was a halt to refresh the troops, and give time for the bateaux laden with provisions to come abreast. In three hours the march was resumed, but before long there was another halt, to guard against an American reconnoitering party which appeared in sight. When the

troops were again about to march, General Burgoyne received a message from Lady Harriet Ackland, expressing a wish to pass to the American camp, and ask permission from General Gates to join her husband. "Though I was ready to believe," writes Burgoyne, "(for I had experience), that patience and fortitude, in a supreme degree, were to be found, as well as every other virtue, under the most tender forms, I was astonished at this proposal. After so long an agitation of spirits, exhausted not only for want of rest, but absolutely want of food, drenched in rain for twelve hours together, that a woman should be capable of such an undertaking as delivering herself to the enemy, probably in the night, and uncertain of what hands she might first fall into, appeared an effort above human nature. The assistance I was enabled to give her was small indeed; I had not even a cup of wine to offer her; but I was told she had found from some kind and fortunate hand, a little rum and dirty water. All I could furnish her was an open boat, and a few lines written upon dirty wet paper, to General Gates, recommending her to his protection.

"Mr. Brudenell, the chaplain of the artillery (the same gentleman who had officiated so signally at General Fraser's funeral), readily undertook to accompany her, and with one female servant, and the major's valet-de-chambre (who had a ball which he had received in the late action then in his shoulder) she rowed down the river to meet the enemy."

The night was far advanced before the boat reached the American outposts. It was challenged by a sentinel who threatened to fire into it should it attempt to pass. Mr. Brudenell made known that it was a flag of truce, and stated who was the personage it brought; report was made to the adjutant-general. Treachery was apprehended, and word was returned to detain the flag until daylight. Lady Harriet and her companions were allowed to land. Major Dearborn, the officer on guard, surrendered his chamber in the guard-house to her ladyship; bedding was brought, a fire was made, tea was served, and her mind being relieved by assurances of her husband's safety, she was enabled to pass a night of comparative comfort and tranquillity.* She proceeded to the American camp in the morning, when, Burgoyne acknowledges, "she was received and accommodated by General Gates, with all the humanity and respect that her rank, her merits, and her fortune deserved."

To resume the fortunes of the retreating army. It rained terribly through the residue of the 9th, and in consequence of repeated halts, they did not reach Saratoga until evening. A detachment of Americans had arrived there before them, and were throwing up intrenchments on a commanding height at Fish Kill. They abandoned their work, forded the Hudson, and joined a

* The statement here given is founded on the report made to General Wilkinson by Major (afterward General) Dearborn. It varies from that of Burgoyne.

force under General Fellows, posted on the hills east of the river. The bridge over the Fish Kill had been destroyed; the artillery could not cross until the ford was examined. Exhausted by fatigue, the men for the most part had not strength nor inclination to cut wood nor make fire, but threw themselves upon the wet ground in their wet clothes, and slept under the continuing rain. "I was quite wet," writes the Baroness Riedesel, "and was obliged to remain in that condition for want of a place to change my apparel. I seated myself near a fire and undressed the children, and we then laid ourselves upon some straw."

At daylight on the 10th, the artillery and the last of the troops passed the fords of the Fish Kill, and took a position upon the heights, and in the redoubts formerly constructed there. To protect the troops from being attacked in passing the ford by the Americans who were approaching, Burgoyne ordered fire to be set to the farmhouses and other buildings on the south side of the Fish Kill. Amongst the rest, the noble mansion of General Schuyler, with storehouses, granaries, mills, and the other appurtenances of a great rural establishment, was entirely consumed. Burgoyne himself estimated the value of property destroyed at ten thousand pounds sterling. The measure was condemned by friend as well as foe, but he justified it on the principles of self-preservation.

The force under General Fellows, posted on the opposite hills of the Hudson, now opened a fire from a battery

commanding the ford of that river. Thus prevented from crossing, Burgoyne thought to retreat along the west side as far as Fort George, on the way to Canada, and sent out workmen under a strong escort to repair the bridges, and open the road toward Fort Edward. The escort was soon recalled and the work abandoned; for the Americans under Gates appeared in great force, on the heights south of the Fish Kill, and seemed preparing to cross and bring on an engagement.

The opposite shores of the Hudson were now lined with detachments of Americans. Bateaux laden with provisions, which had attended the movements of the army, were fired upon, many taken, some retaken with loss of life. It was necessary to land the provisions from such as remained, and bring them up the hill into the camp, which was done under a heavy fire from the American artillery.

Burgoyne called now a general council of war, in which it was resolved, since the bridges could not be repaired, to abandon the artillery and baggage, let the troops carry a supply of provisions upon their backs, push forward in the night, and force their way across the fords at or near Fort Edward.

Before the plan could be put in execution, scouts brought word that the Americans were intrenched opposite those fords, and encamped in force with cannon, on the high ground between Fort Edward and Fort George. In fact, by this time the American army, augmented by

militia and volunteers from all quarters, had posted itself in strong positions on both sides of the Hudson, so as to extend three-fourths of a circle round the enemy.

Giving up all further attempt at retreat, Burgoyne now fortified his camp on the heights to the north of Fish Kill, still hoping that succor might arrive from Sir Henry Clinton, or that an attack upon his trenches might give him some chance of cutting his way through.

In this situation his troops lay continually on their arms. His camp was subjected to cannonading from Fellows' batteries on the opposite side of the Hudson, Gates' batteries on the south of Fish Kill, and a galling fire from Morgan's riflemen, stationed on heights in the rear.

The Baroness De Riedesel and her helpless little ones were exposed to the dangers and horrors of this long turmoil. On the morning when the attack was opened, General De Riedesel sent them to take refuge in a house in the vicinity. On their way thither the baroness saw several men on the opposite bank of the Hudson, leveling their muskets and about to fire. Throwing her children in the back part of the carriage the anxious mother endeavored to cover them with her body. The men fired; a poor wounded soldier, who had sought shelter behind the carriage, received a shot which broke his arm. The baroness succeeded in getting to the house. Some women and crippled soldiers had already taken refuge there. It was mistaken for head-quarters and cannon-

aded. The baroness retreated into the cellar, laid herself in a corner near the door with her children's heads upon her knees, and passed a sleepless night of mental anguish.

In the morning the cannonade began anew. Cannon balls passed through the house repeatedly with a tremendous noise. A poor soldier, who was about to have a leg amputated, lost the other by one of these balls. The day was passed among such horrors. The wives of a major, a lieutenant, and a commissary, were her companions in misery. "They sat together," she says, "deploring their situation, when some one entered to announce bad news." There was whispering among her companions, with deep looks of sorrow. "I immediately suspected," says she, "that my husband had been killed. I shrieked aloud." She was soothed by assurances that nothing had happened to him; and was given to understand by a sidelong glance, that the wife of the lieutenant was the unfortunate one; her husband had been killed.

For six days, she and her children remained in this dismal place of refuge. The cellar was spacious, with three compartments, but the number of occupants increased. The wounded were brought in to be relieved—or to die. She remained with her children near the door, to escape more easily in case of fire. She put straw under mattresses; on these she lay with her little ones, and her female servants slept near her.

Her frequent dread was, that the army might be driven

off or march away, and she be left behind. "I crept up the staircase," says she, "more than once, and when I saw our soldiers near their watchfires, I became more calm, and could even have slept."

There was great distress for water. The river was near, but the Americans shot every one who approached it. A soldier's wife at length summoned resolution, and brought a supply. "The Americans," adds the baroness, "told us afterwards, that they spared her *on account of her sex.*"

"I endeavored," continues she, "to dispel my melancholy, by constantly attending to the wounded. I made them tea and coffee, for which I received their warmest acknowledgments. I often shared my dinner with them."

Her husband visited her once or twice daily, at the risk of his life. On one occasion, General Phillips accompanied him, but was overcome when he saw the sufferings and danger by which this noble woman and her children were surrounded, and of which we have given a very subdued picture. "I would not for ten thousand guineas see this place again," exclaimed the general. "I am heart-broken with what I have seen."

Burgoyne was now reduced to despair. His forces were diminished by losses, by the desertion of Canadians and royalists, and the total defection of the Indians; and on inspection it was found that the provisions on hand, even upon short allowance, would not suffice for more than three days. A council of war, therefore, was called

of all the generals, field-officers, and captains commanding troops. The deliberations were brief. All concurred in the necessity of opening a treaty with General Gates, for a surrender on honorable terms. While they were yet deliberating, an eighteen-pound ball passed through the tent, sweeping across the table round which they were seated.

Negotiations were accordingly opened on the 13th, under sanction of a flag. Lieutenant Kingston, Burgoyne's adjutant-general, was the bearer of a note, proposing a cessation of hostilities until terms could be adjusted.

The first terms offered by Gates were that the enemy should lay down their arms within their intrenchments and surrender themselves prisoners of war. These were indignantly rejected, with an intimation that, if persisted in, hostilities must recommence.

Counter-proposals were then made by General Burgoyne, and finally accepted by General Gates. According to these, the British troops were to march out of the camp with artillery and all the honors of war, to a fixed place, where they were to pile their arms at a word of command from their own officers. They were to be allowed a free passage to Europe upon condition of not serving again in America, during the present war. The army was not to be separated, especially the men from the officers; roll-calling and other regular duties were to be permitted; the officers were to be on parole, and to

wear their side-arms. All private property to be sacred; no baggage to be searched or molested. All persons appertaining to or following the camp, whatever might be their country, were to be comprehended in these terms of capitulation.

Schuyler's late secretary, Colonel Varick, who was still in camp, writes to him on the 19th: "Burgoyne says he will send all his general officers at ten, in the morning, to finish and settle the business. This, I trust, will be accomplished before twelve, and then I shall have the honor and happiness of congratulating you on the glorious success of our arms. I wish to God I could say under your command.

"If you wish to see Burgoyne, you will be necessitated to see him here."*

In the night of the 16th, before the articles of capitulation had been signed, a British officer from the army below made his way into the camp, with despatches from Sir Henry Clinton, announcing that he had captured the forts in the Highlands, and had pushed detachments further up the Hudson. Burgoyne now submitted to the consideration of his officers, "whether it was consistent with public faith, and if so, expedient, to suspend the execution of the treaty and trust to events." His own opinion inclined in the affirmative, but the majority of the council determined that the public faith was fully

* Schuyler's *Papers*.

plighted. The capitulation was accordingly signed by Burgoyne on the 17th of October.

The British army, at the time of the surrender, was reduced by capture, death, and desertion, from nine thousand to five thousand seven hundred and fifty-two men. That of Gates, regulars and militia, amounted to ten thousand five hundred and fifty-four men on duty; between two and three thousand being on the sick list, or absent on furlough.

By this capitulation, the Americans gained a fine train of artillery, seven thousand stand of arms, and a great quantity of clothing, tents, and military stores of all kinds.

When the British troops marched forth to deposit their arms at the appointed place, Colonel Wilkinson, the adjutant-general, was the only American soldier to be seen. Gates had ordered his troops to keep rigidly within their lines, that they might not add by their presence to the humiliation of a brave enemy. In fact, throughout all his conduct, during the campaign, British writers, and Burgoyne himself, give him credit for acting with great humanity and forbearance.*

Wilkinson, in his memoirs, describes the first meeting of Gates and Burgoyne, which took place at the head of

* "At the very time," say the British historians, "that General Burgoyne was receiving the most favorable conditions for himself and his ruined army, the fine village or town of Esopus, at no very great distance, was reduced to ashes, and not a house left standing."

the American camp. They were attended by their staffs and by other general officers. Burgoyne was in a rich royal uniform. Gates in a plain blue frock. When they had approached nearly within sword's length they reined up and halted. Burgoyne, raising his hat most gracefully, said: "The fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner;" to which the other, returning his salute, replied, "I shall always be ready to testify that it has not been through any fault of your Excellency."

"We passed through the American camp," writes the already cited Hessian officer, "in which all the regiments were drawn out beside the artillery, and stood under arms. Not one of them was uniformly clad; each had on the clothes which he wore in the fields, the church, or the tavern. They stood, however, like soldiers, well arranged, and with a military air, in which there was but little to find fault with. All the muskets had bayonets, and the sharpshooters had rifles. The men all stood so still that we were filled with wonder. Not one of them made a single motion as if he would speak with his neighbor. Nay more, all the lads that stood there in rank and file, kind nature had formed so trim, so slender, so nervous, that it was a pleasure to look at them, and we all were surprised at the sight of such a handsome, well-formed race.* In all earnestness," adds he, "English America surpasses the most of Europe in the growth

* *Briefe aus Neu England.* Schlözer's *Briefwechsel.*

and looks of its male population. The whole nation has a natural turn and talent for war and a soldier's life."

He made himself somewhat merry, however, with the equipments of the officers. A few wore regimentals; and those fashioned to their own notions as to cut and color, being provided by themselves. Brown coats with sea-green facings, white linings and silver trimmings, and gray coats in abundance, with buff facings and cuffs, and gilt buttons; in short, every variety of pattern.

The brigadiers and generals wore uniforms and belts which designated their rank; but most of the colonels and other officers were in their ordinary clothes; a musket and bayonet in hand, and a cartridge-box or powder-horn over the shoulder. But what especially amused him was the variety of uncouth wigs worn by the officers, the lingerings of an uncouth fashion.

Most of the troops thus noticed were the hastily levied militia, the yeomanry of the country. "There were regular regiments also," he said, "which, for want of time and cloth, were not yet equipped in uniform. These had standards with various emblems and mottoes, some of which had for us a very satirical signification.

"But I must say, to the credit of the enemy's regiments," continues he, "that not a man was to be found therein who, as we marched by, made even a sign of taunting, insulting exultation, hatred, or any other evil feeling; on the contrary, they seemed as though they would rather do us honor. As we marched by the great

tent of General Gates, he invited in the brigadiers and commanders of regiments, and various refreshments were set before them. Gates is between fifty and sixty years of age; wears his own thin gray hair; is active and friendly, and, on account of the weakness of his eyes, constantly wears spectacles. At head-quarters we met many officers, who treated us with all possible politeness."

We now give another page of the Baroness De Riedesel's fortunes, at this time of the surrender. "My husband's groom brought me a message to join him with the children. I once more seated myself in my dear calash, and while riding through the American camp was gratified to observe that nobody looked at us with disrespect, but, on the contrary, greeted us, and seemed touched at the sight of a captive mother with her children. I must candidly confess that I did not present myself, though so situated, with much courage to the enemy, for the thing was entirely new to me. When I drew near the tents, a good-looking man advanced towards me, and helping the children from the calash, kissed and caressed them: he then offered me his arm, and tears trembled in his eyes. 'You tremble,' said he; 'do not be alarmed, I pray you.' 'Sir,' cried I, 'a countenance so expressive of benevolence, and the kindness you have evinced towards my children, are sufficient to dispel all apprehensions.' He then ushered me into the tent of General Gates, whom I found engaged in friendly conversation with Generals Burgoyne and Phillips. Gen-

eral Burgoyne said to me, 'You can now be quiet, and free from all apprehension of danger.' I replied that I should indeed be reprehensible, if I felt any anxiety, when our general felt none, and was on such friendly terms with General Gates.

"All the generals remained to dine with General Gates. The gentleman who had received me with so much kindness, came and said to me, 'You may find it embarrassing to be the only lady in such a large company of gentlemen; will you come with your children to my tent, and partake of a frugal dinner, offered with the best will?' 'By the kindness you show to me,' returned I, 'you induce me to believe that you have a wife and children.' He informed me that he was General Schuyler. He regaled me with smoked tongues, which were excellent, with beefsteaks, potatoes, fresh butter and bread. Never did a dinner give me more pleasure than this, and I read the same happy change on the countenances of all those around me. That my husband was out of danger, was a still greater joy. After dinner, General Schuyler begged me to pay him a visit at his house at Albany, where he expected that General Burgoyne would also be his guest. I sent to ask my husband's directions, who advised me to accept the invitation." The reception which she met with at Albany, from General Schuyler's wife and daughters, was not, she said, like the reception of enemies, but of the most intimate friends. "They loaded us with kindness," writes she,

"and they behaved in the same manner towards General Burgoyne, though he had ordered their splendid establishment to be burnt, and without any necessity, it was said. But all their actions proved, that in the sight of the misfortunes of others they quickly forgot their own." It was, in fact, the lot of Burgoyne to have coals of fire heaped on his head by those with whom he had been at enmity. One of the first persons whom he had encountered in the American camp was General Schuyler. He attempted to make some explanation or excuse about the recent destruction of his property. Schuyler begged him not to think of it, as the occasion justified it, according to the principles and rules of war.

"He did more," said Burgoyne, in a speech before the House of Commons, "he sent an aide-de-camp to conduct me to Albany; in order, as he expressed it, to procure better quarters than a stranger might be able to find. That gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and, to my great surprise, presented me to Mrs. Schuyler and her family. In that house I remained during my whole stay in Albany, with a table of more than twenty covers for me and my friends, and every other demonstration of hospitality."

This was indeed realizing the vaunted courtesy and magnanimity of the age of chivalry.

The surrender of Burgoyne was soon followed by the evacuation of Ticonderoga and Fort Independence, the garrisons retiring to the Isle Aux Noix and St. John's.

As to the armament on the Hudson, the commanders whom Sir Henry Clinton had left in charge of it, received, in the midst of their desolating career, the astounding intelligence of the capture of the army with which they had come to coöperate. Nothing remained for them, therefore, but to drop down the river and return to New York.

The whole expedition, though it had effected much damage to the Americans, failed to be of essential service to the royal cause. The fortresses in the Highlands could not be maintained, and had been evacuated and destroyed, and the plundering and burning of defenseless towns and villages, and especially the conflagration of Esopus, had given to the whole enterprise the character of a maraud, disgraceful in civilized warfare, and calculated only to inflame more deadly enmity and determined opposition.

NOTE.

The reader may desire to know the sequel of Lady Harriet Ackland's romantic story. Her husband recovered from his wounds, and they returned together to England. Major Ackland retained a grateful sense of the kind treatment they had experienced from the Americans. At a dinner party he had warm words with another British officer, who questioned the American character for courage. A duel ensued, in which the major was killed. The shock to Lady Harriet produced mental derangement. She recovered in the course of a couple of years, and ultimately was married to Mr. Brudenell, the worthy chaplain who had been her companion and protector in the time of her distress.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WASHINGTON ADVANCES TO SKIPPACK CREEK.—THE BRITISH FLEET IN THE DELAWARE.—FORTS AND OBSTRUCTIONS IN THE RIVER.—WASHINGTON MEDITATES AN ATTACK ON THE BRITISH CAMP.—BATTLE OF GERMANTOWN.

HAVING given the catastrophe of the British invasion from the North, we will revert to that part of the year's campaign which was passing under the immediate eye of Washington. We left him encamped at Pott's Grove towards the end of September, giving his troops a few days' repose after their severe fatigues. Being rejoined by Wayne and Smallwood with their brigades, and other troops being arrived from the Jerseys, his force amounted to about eight thousand Continentals and three thousand militia; with these he advanced, on the 30th of September, to Skippack Creek, about fourteen miles from Germantown, where the main body of the British army lay encamped, a detachment under Cornwallis occupying Philadelphia.

Immediately after the battle of Brandywine, Admiral Lord Howe with great exertions had succeeded in getting his ships of war and transports round from the Chesapeake into the Delaware and had anchored them

along the western shore from Reedy Island to Newcastle. They were prevented from approaching nearer by obstructions which the Americans had placed in the river. The lowest of these were at Billingsport (or Bylling's Point), where chevaux-de-frise in the channel of the river were protected by a strong redoubt on the Jersey shore. Higher up were Fort Mifflin on Mud (or Fort) Island, and Fort Mercer on the Jersey shore; with chevaux-de-frise between them. Washington had exerted himself to throw a garrison into Fort Mifflin, and keep up the obstructions of the river. "If these can be maintained," said he, "General Howe's situation will not be the most agreeable; for if his supplies can be stopped by water, it may easily be done by land. To do both shall be my utmost endeavor; and I am not without hope that the acquisition of Philadelphia may, instead of his good fortune, prove his ruin." *

Sir William Howe was perfectly aware of this, and had concerted operations with his brother by land and water, to reduce the forts and clear away the obstructions of the river. With this view he detached a part of his force into the Jerseys, to proceed, in the first instance, against the fortifications at Billingsport.

Washington had been for some days anxiously on the lookout for some opportunity to strike a blow of consequence, when two intercepted letters gave him intelli-

* Letter to the President of Congress. Sparks, v. 71.

gence of this movement. He immediately determined to make an attack upon the British camp at Germantown, while weakened by the absence of this detachment. To understand the plan of the attack, some description of the British place of encampment is necessary.

Germantown, at that time, was little more than one continued street, extending two miles north and south. The houses were mostly of stone, low and substantial, with steep roofs and projecting eaves. They stood apart from each other, with fruit trees in front and small gardens. Beyond the village, and about a hundred yards east of the road, stood a spacious stone edifice, with ornamented grounds, statues, groves, and shrubbery, the country-seat of Benjamin Chew, chief justice of Pennsylvania previous to the Revolution: we shall have more to say concerning this mansion presently.

Four roads approached the village from above; that is, from the north. The Skippack, which was the main road, led over Chestnut Hill and Mount Airy down to and through the village toward Philadelphia, forming the street of which we have just spoken. On its right, and nearly parallel, was the Monatawny or Ridge road, passing near the Schuylkill, and entering the main road below the village.

On the left of the Skippack or main road, was the Limekiln road, running nearly parallel to it for a time, and then turning towards it, almost at right angles, so as to enter the village at the market-place. Still further to

the left or east, and outside of all, was the Old York road, falling into the main road some distance below the village.

The main body of the British forces lay encamped across the lower part of the village, divided into almost equal parts by the main street or Skippack road. The right wing, commanded by General Grant, was to the east of the road, the left wing to the west. Each wing was covered by strong detachments, and guarded by cavalry. General Howe had his head-quarters in the rear.

The advance of the army, composed of the 2d battalion of British light infantry, with a train of artillery, was more than two miles from the main body, on the west of the road, with an outlying picket stationed with two six-pounders at Allen's house on Mount Airy. About three quarters of a mile in the rear of the light infantry, lay encamped in a field opposite "Chew's House," the 40th regiment of infantry, under Colonel Musgrave.

According to Washington's plan for the attack, Sullivan was to command the right wing, composed of his own division, principally Maryland troops, and the division of General Wayne. He was to be sustained by a *corps de reserve*, under Lord Stirling, composed of Nash's North Carolina and Maxwell's Virginia brigades, and to be flanked by the brigade of General Conway. He was to march down the Skippack road and attack the left wing; at the same time General Armstrong, with the Pennsylvania militia, was to pass down the Monatawny or Ridge road, and get upon the enemy's left and rear.

Greene with the left wing, composed of his own division and the division of General Stephen, and flanked by McDougall's brigade, was to march down the Limekiln road, so as to enter the village at the market-house. The two divisions were to attack the enemy's right wing in front, McDougall with his brigade to attack it in flank, while Smallwood's division of Maryland militia and Forman's Jersey brigade, making a circuit by the Old York road, were to attack it in the rear. Two thirds of the forces were thus directed against the enemy's right wing, under the idea that, if it could be forced, the whole army must be pushed into the Schuylkill, or compelled to surrender. The attack was to begin on all quarters at daybreak.*

About dusk, on the 3d of October, the army left its encampment at Matuchen Hills, by its different routes. Washington accompanied the right wing. It had fifteen miles of weary march to make over rough roads, so that it was after daybreak when the troops emerged from the woods on Chestnut Hill. The morning was dark with a heavy fog. A detachment advanced to attack the enemy's out-picket, stationed at Allen's house. The patrol was led by Captain Allen McLane, a brave Maryland officer, well acquainted with the ground, and with the position of the enemy. He fell in with double sentries, whom he killed with the loss of one man. The alarm,

* Letter of Washington to the President of Congress. Letter of Sullivan to the President of New Hampshire.

however, was given; the distant roll of a drum and the call to arms, resounded through the murky air. The picket guard, after discharging their two six-pounders, were routed, and retreated down the south side of Mount Airy to the battalion of light infantry who were forming in order of battle. As their pursuers descended into the valley, the sun rose, but was soon obscured. Wayne led the attack upon the light infantry. "They broke at first," writes he, "without waiting to receive us, but soon formed again, when a heavy and well-directed fire took place on both sides."

They again gave way, but being supported by the grenadiers, returned to the charge. Sullivan's division and Conway's brigade formed on the west of the road, and joined in the attack; the rest of the troops were too far to the north to render any assistance. The infantry, after fighting bravely for a time, broke and ran, leaving their artillery behind. They were hotly pursued by Wayne. His troops remembered the bloody 20th of September, and the ruthless slaughter of their comrades. "They pushed on with the bayonet," says Wayne, "and took ample vengeance for that night's work." The officers endeavored to restrain their fury towards those who cried for mercy, but to little purpose. It was a terrible mêlée. The fog, together with the smoke of the cannonry and musketry, made it almost as dark as night; our people mistaking one another for the enemy frequently exchanged shots before they discovered their error. The

whole of the enemy's advance were driven from their camping ground, leaving their tents standing, with all their baggage. Colonel Musgrave, with six companies of the 40th regiment, threw himself into Chew's House, barricaded the doors and lower windows, and took post above stairs; the main torrent of the retreat passed by, pursued by Wayne into the village.

As the residue of this division of the army came up to join in the pursuit, Musgrave and his men opened a fire of musketry upon them from the upper windows of his citadel. This brought them to a halt. Some of the officers were for pushing on; but General Knox stoutly objected, insisting on the old military maxim, never to leave a garrisoned castle in the rear.

His objection unluckily prevailed. A flag was sent with a summons to surrender. A young Virginian, Lieutenant Smith, volunteered to be the bearer. As he was advancing, he was fired upon and received a mortal wound. This house was now cannonaded, but the artillery was too light to have the desired effect. An attempt was made to set fire to the basement. He who attempted it was shot dead from a grated cellar window. Half an hour was thus spent in vain; scarce any of the defenders of the house were injured, though many of the assailants were slain. At length a regiment was left to keep guard upon the mansion and hold its garrison in check, and the rear division again pressed forward.

This half hour's delay, however, of one half of the

army, disconcerted the action. The divisions and brigades thus separated from each other by the skirmishing attack upon Chew's House, could not be reunited. The fog and smoke rendered all objects indistinct at thirty yards' distance; the different parts of the army knew nothing of the position or movements of each other, and the commander-in-chief could take no view nor gain any information of the situation of the whole. The original plan of attack was only effectively carried into operation in the centre. The flanks and rear of the enemy were nearly unmolested; still the action, though disconnected, irregular and partial, was animated in various quarters. Sullivan, being reinforced by Nash's North Carolina troops and Conway's brigade, pushed on a mile beyond Chew's House, where the left wing of the enemy gave way before him.

Greene and Stephen, with their divisions, having had to make a circuit, were late in coming into action, and became separated from each other, part of Stephen's division being arrested by a heavy fire from Chew's House and pausing to return it; Greene, however, with his division, comprising the brigades of Muhlenberg and Scott, pressed rapidly forward, drove an advance regiment of light infantry before him, took a number of prisoners, and made his way quite to the market-house in the centre of the village, where he encountered the right wing of the British drawn up to receive him. The impetuosity of his attack had an evident effect upon the

enemy, who began to waver. Forman and Smallwood, with the Jersey and Maryland militia, were just showing themselves on the right flank of the enemy, and our troops seemed on the point of carrying the whole encampment. At this moment a singular panic seized our army. Various causes are assigned for it. Sullivan alleges that his troops had expended all their cartridges, and were alarmed by seeing the enemy gathering on their left, and by the cry of a light horseman, that the enemy were getting round them. Wayne's division, which had pushed the enemy three miles, was alarmed by the approach of a large body of American troops on its left flank, which it mistook for foes, and fell back in defiance of every effort of its officers to rally it. In its retreat it came upon Stephen's division and threw it into a panic, being, in its turn, mistaken for the enemy; thus all fell into confusion, and our army fled from their own victory.

In the meantime, the enemy having recovered from the first effects of the surprise, advanced in their turn. General Grey brought up the left wing, and pressed upon the American troops as they receded. Lord Cornwallis, with a squadron of light horse from Philadelphia, arrived just in time to join in the pursuit.

The retreat of the Americans was attended with less loss than might have been expected, and they carried off all their cannon and wounded. This was partly owing to the good generalship of Greene, in keeping up a retreat-

ing fight with the enemy for nearly five miles; and partly to a check given by Wayne, who turned his cannon upon the enemy from an eminence, near White Marsh Church, and brought them to a stand. The retreat continued through the day to Perkiomen Creek, a distance of twenty miles.

The loss of the enemy in this action is stated by them to be seventy-one killed, four hundred and fifteen wounded, and fourteen missing: among the killed was Brigadier-general Agnew. The American loss was one hundred and fifty killed, five hundred and twenty-one wounded, and about four hundred taken prisoners. Among the killed was General Nash of North Carolina. Among the prisoners was Colonel Matthews of Virginia, who commanded a Virginia regiment in the left wing. Most of his officers and men were killed or wounded in fighting bravely near the market-house, and he himself received several bayonet wounds.

Speaking of Washington's conduct amidst the perplexities of this confused battle, General Sullivan writes, "I saw, with great concern, our brave commander-in-chief exposing himself to the hottest fire of the enemy, in such a manner, that regard for my country obliged me to ride to him, and beg him to retire. He, to gratify me and some others, withdrew to a small distance, but his anxiety for the fate of the day soon brought him up again, where he remained till our troops had retreated."

The sudden retreat of the army gave him surprise,

chagrin, and mortification. "Every account," said he, subsequently, in a letter to the President of Congress, "confirms the opinion I at first entertained, that our troops retreated at the instant when victory was declaring herself in our favor. The tumult, disorder, and even despair, which, it seems, had taken place in the British army, were scarcely to be paralleled; and, it is said, so strongly did the ideas of a retreat prevail, that Chester was fixed on for their rendezvous. I can discover no other cause for not improving this happy opportunity, than the extreme haziness of the weather."

So also Captain Heth of Virginia, who was in the action: "What makes this inglorious flight more grating to us is, that we know the enemy had orders to retreat, and rendezvous at Chester; and that upwards of two thousand Hessians had actually crossed the Schuylkill for that purpose; that the tories were in the utmost distress, and moving out of the city; that our friends confined in the new jail made it ring with shouts of joy; that we passed, in pursuing them, upwards of twenty pieces of cannon, their tents standing filled with their choicest baggage; in fine, everything was as we could wish, when the above flight took place."*

No one was more annoyed than Wayne. "Fortune smiled on us for full three hours," writes he, "the enemy were broke, dispersed, and flying in all quarters — we

* Letter to Col. Lamb in the *Lamb Papers*, N. Y. Hist. Soc., and quoted in the *Life of Lamb*, p. 183.

were in possession of their whole encampment, together with their artillery park, etc., etc. A *wind-mill* attack was made upon a house into which six light companies had thrown themselves, to avoid our bayonets. Our troops were deceived by this attack, thinking it something formidable. They fell back to assist,—the enemy believing it to be a retreat, followed,—confusion ensued, and we ran away from the arms of victory open to receive us."

In fact, as has justly been observed by an experienced officer, the plan of attack was too widely extended for strict concert, and too complicated for precise coöperation, as it had to be conducted in the night, and with a large proportion of undisciplined militia; and yet, a bewildering fog alone appears to have prevented its complete success.

But although the Americans were balked of the victory, which seemed within their grasp, the impression made by the audacity of this attempt upon Germantown, was greater, we are told, than that caused by any single incident of the war after Lexington and Bunker's Hill.*

A British military historian, a contemporary, observes: "In this action the Americans acted upon the offensive; and though repulsed with loss, showed themselves a formidable adversary, capable of charging with resolution and retreating with good order. The hope, therefore,

* Reed's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 319.

entertained from the effect of any action with them as decisive, and likely to put a speedy termination to the war, was exceedingly abated." *

The battle had its effect also in France. The Count De Vergennes observed to the American commissioners in Paris on their first interview, that nothing struck him so much as General Washington's attacking and giving battle to General Howe's army; that to bring an army raised within a year to this pass promised everything.

The effect on the army itself may be judged from letters written at the time by officers to their friends. "Though we gave away a complete victory," writes one, "we have learned this valuable truth, that we are able to beat them by vigorous exertion, and that we are far superior in point of swiftness. We are in high spirits; every action gives our troops fresh vigor, and a greater opinion of their own strength. Another bout or two must make the situation of the enemy very disagreeable."†

Another writes to his father: "For my own part, I am so fully convinced of the justice of the cause in which we are contending, and that Providence, in its own good time, will succeed and bless it, that, were I to see twelve of the United States overrun by our cruel invaders, I should still believe the thirteenth would not only save itself, but also work out the deliverance of the others." ‡

* *Civil War in America*, i. 269.

† Capt. Heth to Col. Lamb.

‡ Major Shaw. *Memoirs*, by Josiah Quincy, p. 41

CHAPTER XXIV.

WASHINGTON AT WHITE MARSH.—MEASURES TO CUT OFF THE ENEMY'S SUPPLIES.—THE FORTS ON THE DELAWARE REINFORCED.—COLONEL GREENE OF RHODE ISLAND AT FORT MERCER.—ATTACK AND DEFENSE OF THAT FORT.—DEATH OF COUNT DONOP.

WASHINGTON remained a few days at Perkiomen Creek, to give his army time to rest, and recover from the disorder incident to a retreat. Having been reinforced by the arrival of twelve hundred Rhode Island troops from Peekskill, under General Varnum, and nearly a thousand Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania troops, he gradually drew nearer to Philadelphia, and took a strong position at White Marsh, within fourteen miles of that city. By a resolution of Congress, all persons taken within thirty miles of any place occupied by British troops, in the act of conveying supplies to them, were subjected to martial law. Acting under the resolution, Washington detached large bodies of militia to scour the roads above the city, and between the Schuylkill and Chester, to intercept all supplies going to the enemy.

On the forts and obstructions in the river, Washing-

ton mainly counted to complete the harassment of Philadelphia. These defenses had been materially impaired. The works at Billingsport had been attacked and destroyed, and some of the enemy's ships had forced their way through the chevaux-de-frise placed there. The American frigate *Delaware*, stationed in the river between the upper forts and Philadephia, had run aground before a British battery, and been captured.

It was now the great object of the Howes to reduce and destroy, and of Washington to defend and maintain the remaining forts and obstructions. Fort Mifflin, which we have already mentioned, was erected on a low, green, reedy island in the Delaware, a few miles below Philadelphia, and below the mouth of the Schuylkill. It consisted of a strong redoubt, with extensive outworks and batteries. There was but a narrow channel between the island and the Pennsylvania shore. The main channel, practicable for ships, was on the other side. In this were sunk strong chevaux-de-frise, difficult either to be weighed or cut through, and dangerous to any ships that might run against them; subjected as they would be to the batteries of Fort Mifflin on one side, and on the other to those of Fort Mercer, a strong work at Red Bank on the Jersey shore.

Fort Mifflin was garrisoned by troops of the Maryland line, under Lieutenant-colonel Samuel Smith of Baltimore; and had kept up a brave defense against batteries erected by the enemy on the Pennsylvania shore. A re-

inforcement of Virginia troops made the garrison between three and four hundred strong.

Floating batteries, galleys, and fire-ships, commanded by Commodore Hazelwood, were stationed under the forts and about the river.

Fort Mercer had hitherto been garrisoned by militia, but Washington now replaced them by four hundred of General Varnum's Rhode Island Continentals. Colonel Christopher Greene was put in command; a brave officer who had accompanied Arnold in his rough expedition to Canada, and fought valiantly under the walls of Quebec. "The post with which you are intrusted," writes Washington in his letter of instructions, "is of the utmost importance to America. The whole defense of the Delaware depends upon it; and consequently all the enemy's hopes of keeping Philadelphia, and finally succeeding in the present campaign."

Colonel Greene was accompanied by Captain Mauduit Duplessis, who was to have the direction of the artillery. He was a young French engineer of great merit, who had volunteered in the American cause, and received a commission from Congress. The chevaux-de-frise in the river had been constructed under his superintendence.

Greene, aided by Duplessis, made all haste to put Fort Mercer in a state of defense; but before the outworks were completed, he was surprised (October 22d) by the appearance of a large force emerging from a wood within cannon-shot of the fort. Their uniforms showed them to

be Hessians. They were, in fact, four battalions, twelve hundred strong, of grenadiers, picked men, beside light infantry and chasseurs, all commanded by Count Donop, who had figured in the last year's campaign.

Colonel Greene, in nowise dismayed by the superiority of the enemy, forming in glistening array before the wood, prepared for a stout resistance. In a little while an officer was descried, riding slowly up with a flag, accompanied by a drummer. Greene ordered his men to keep out of sight, that the fort might appear but slightly garrisoned.

When within proper distance, the drummer sounded a parley and the officer summoned the garrison to surrender; with a threat of no quarter in case of resistance.

Greene's reply was, that the post would be defended to the last extremity.

The flag rode back and made report. Forthwith the Hessians were seen at work throwing up a battery within half a mile of the outworks. It was finished by four o'clock, and opened a heavy cannonade, under cover of which the enemy were preparing to approach.

As the American outworks were but half finished, and were too extensive to be manned by the garrison, it was determined by Greene and Duplessis that the troops should make but a short stand there; to gall the enemy in their approach, and then retire within the redoubt, which was defended by a deep intrenchment, boarded and fraised.

Donop led on his troops in gallant style, under cover of a heavy fire from his battery. They advanced in two columns, to attack the outworks in two places. As they advanced, they were excessively galled by a flanking fire from the American galleys and batteries, and by sharp volleys from the outworks. The latter, however, as had been concerted, were quickly abandoned by the garrison. The enemy entered at two places, and, imagining the day their own, the two columns pushed on with shouts to storm different parts of the redoubt. As yet, no troops were to be seen; but as one of the columns approached the redoubt on the north side, a tremendous discharge of grape-shot and musketry burst forth from the embrasures in front, and a half-masked battery on the left. The slaughter was prodigious; the column was driven back in confusion. Count Donop, with the other column, in attempting the south side of the redoubt, had passed the abatis; some of his men had traversed the fosse; others had clambered over the pickets, when a similar tempest of artillery and musketry burst upon them. Some were killed on the spot, many were wounded, and the rest were driven out. Donop himself was wounded, and remained on the spot; Lieutenant-colonel Mingerode, the second in command, was also dangerously wounded. Several other of the best officers were slain or disabled. Lieutenant-colonel Linsing, the oldest remaining officer, endeavored to draw off the troops in good order, but in vain; they retreated in confusion, hotly pursued, and

were again cut up in their retreat by the flanking fire from the galleys and floating batteries.

The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded, in this brief but severe action, was about four hundred men That of the Americans, eight killed and twenty-nine wounded.

As Captain Mauduit Duplessis was traversing the scene of slaughter after the repulse, he was accosted by a voice from among the slain: "Whoever you are, draw me hence." It was the unfortunate Count Donop. Duplessis had him conveyed to a house near the fort, where every attention was paid to his comfort. He languished for three days, during which Duplessis was continually at his bedside. "This is finishing a noble career early," said the count sadly, as he found his death approaching, —then, as if conscious of the degrading service in which he had fallen, hired out by his prince to aid a foreign power in quelling the brave struggle of a people for their liberty, and contrasting it with that in which the chivalrous youth by his bedside was engaged,—"I die," added he bitterly, "the victim of my ambition, and of the avarice of my sovereign." * He was but thirty-seven years of age at the time of his death.

According to the plan of the enemy, Fort Mifflin, opposite to Fort Mercer, was to have been attacked at the same time by water. The force employed was the

* De Chastellux, vol. i. p. 266.

Augusta of sixty-four guns, the *Roebuck* of forty-four, two frigates, the *Merlin* sloop of eighteen guns, and a galley. They forced their way through the lower line of chevaux-de-frise; but the *Augusta* and *Merlin* ran aground below the second line, and every effort to get them off proved fruitless. To divert attention from their situation, the other vessels drew as near to Fort Mifflin as they could, and opened a cannonade; but the obstructions in the river had so altered the channel that they could not get within very effective distance. They kept up a fire upon the fort throughout the evening, and recommenced it early in the morning, as did likewise the British batteries on the Pennsylvania shore; hoping that under cover of it the ships might be got off. A strong adverse wind, however, kept the tide from rising sufficiently to float them.

The Americans discovered their situation, and sent down four fire-ships to destroy them, but without effect. A heavy fire was now opened upon them from the galleys and floating batteries. It was warmly returned. In the course of the action, a red-hot shot set the *Augusta* on fire. It was impossible to check the flames. All haste was made with boats to save the crew, while the other ships drew off as fast as possible to get out of the reach of the explosion. She blew up, however, while the second lieutenant, the chaplain, the gunner, and several of the crew were yet on board, most of whom perished. The *Merlin* was now set on fire and abandoned; the *Roe-*

buck and the other vessels dropped down the river, and the attack on Fort Mifflin was given up.

These signal repulses of the enemy had an animating effect on the public mind, and were promptly noticed by Congress. Colonel Greene, who commanded at Fort Mercer, Lieutenant-colonel Smith of Maryland, who commanded at Fort Mifflin, and Comodore Hazelwood, who commanded the galleys, received the thanks of that body; and subsequently, a sword was voted to each, as a testimonial of distinguished merit.

CHAPTER XXV.

DE KALB COMMISSIONED MAJOR-GENERAL. — PRETENSIONS OF CONWAY.—THWARTED BY WASHINGTON.—CONWAY CABAL.—GATES REMISS IN CORRESPONDENCE.—DILATORY IN FORWARDING TROOPS.—MISSION OF HAMILTON TO GATES.—WILKINSON BEARER OF DESPATCHES TO CONGRESS.—A TARDY TRAVELER.—HIS REWARD.—CONWAY CORRESPONDENCE DETECTED.—WASHINGTON'S APOLOGY FOR HIS ARMY.

WE have heretofore had occasion to advert to the annoyances and perplexities occasioned to Washington by the claims and pretensions of foreign officers who had entered into the service. Among the officers who came out with Lafayette, was the Baron De Kalb, a German by birth, but who had long been employed in the French service, and though a silver-haired veteran, sixty years of age, was yet fresh and active and vigorous; which some attributed to his being a rigid water drinker. In the month of September, Congress had given him the commission of major-general, to date with that of Lafayette.

This instantly produced a remonstrance from Brigadier-general Conway, the Gallic Hibernian, of whom we have occasionally made mention, who considered himself slighted and forgot, in their giving a superior rank to his

own to a person who had not rendered the cause the least service, and who had been his inferior in France. He claimed, therefore, for himself, the rank of major-general, and was supported in his pretensions by persons both in and out of Congress; especially by Mifflin, the quartermaster-general.

Washington had already been disgusted by the overweening presumption of Conway, and was surprised to hear that his application was likely to be successful. He wrote on the 17th of October, to Richard Henry Lee, then in Congress, warning him that such an appointment would be as unfortunate a measure as ever was adopted —one that would give a fatal blow to the existence of the army. "Upon so interesting a subject," observes he, "I must speak plainly. The duty I owe my country, the ardent desire I have to promote its true interests, and justice to individuals, require this of me. General Conway's merit as an officer, and his importance in this army, exist more in his own imagination than in reality. For it is a maxim with him to leave no service of his own untold, nor to want anything which is to be obtained by importunity. . . . . I would ask why the youngest brigadier in the service should be put over the heads of the oldest, and thereby take rank and command of gentlemen who but yesterday were his seniors; gentlemen who, as I will be bound to say in behalf of some of them at least, are of sound judgment and unquestionable bravery. . . . . This truth I am well assured of, that they will

not serve under him. I leave you to guess, therefore, at the situation this army would be in at so important a crisis, if this event should take place."

This opposition to his presumptuous aspirations, at once threw Conway into a faction forming under the auspices of General Mifflin. This gentleman had recently tendered his resignation of the commission of major-general and quartermaster-general on the plea of ill-health, but was busily engaged in intrigues against the commander-in-chief, towards whom he had long cherished a secret hostility. Conway now joined with him heart and hand, and soon became so active and prominent a member of the faction that it acquired the name of *Conway's Cabal.* The object was to depreciate the military character of Washington, in comparison with that of Gates, to whom was attributed the whole success of the Northern campaign. Gates was perfectly ready for such an elevation. He was intoxicated by his good fortune, and seemed to forget that he had reaped where he had not sown, and that the defeat of Burgoyne had been insured by plans concerted and put in operation before his arrival in the Northern Department.

In fact, in the excitement of his vanity, Gates appears to have forgotten that there was a commander-in-chief, to whom he was accountable. He neglected to send him any despatch on the subject of the surrender of Burgoyne, contenting himself with sending one to Congress, then sitting at Yorktown. Washington was left to hear

of the important event by casual rumor, and was for several days in anxious uncertainty, until he received a copy of the capitulation in a letter from General Putnam.

Gates was equally neglectful to inform him of the disposition he intended to make of the army under his command. He delayed even to forward Morgan's rifle corps, though their services were no longer needed in his camp, and were so much required in the south. It was determined, therefore, in a council of war, that one of Washington's staff should be sent to Gates to represent the critical state of affairs, and that a large reinforcement from the Northern army would, in all probability, reduce General Howe to the same situation with Burgoyne, should he remain in Philadelphia, without being able to remove the obstructions in the Delaware, and open a free communication with his shipping.

Colonel Alexander Hamilton, his youthful but intelligent aide-de-camp, was charged with this mission. He bore a letter from Washington to Gates, dated October 30th, of which the following is an extract:

"By this opportunity, I do myself the pleasure to congratulate you on the signal success of the army under your command, in compelling General Burgoyne and his whole force to surrender themselves prisoners of war; an event that does the highest honor to the American arms, and which, I hope, will be attended with the most extensive and happy consequences. At the same time, I cannot but regret that a matter of such magnitude, and so

interesting to our general operations, should have reached me by report only; or through the channel of letters not bearing that authenticity which the importance of it required, and which it would have received by a line under your signature stating the simple fact."

Such was the calm and dignified notice of an instance of official disrespect, almost amounting to insubordination. It is doubtful whether Gates, in his state of mental effervescence, felt the noble severity of the rebuke.

The officer whom Gates had employed as bearer of his despatch to Congress, was Wilkinson, his adjutant-general and devoted sycophant: a man at once pompous and servile. He was so long on the road that the articles of the treaty, according to his own account, reached the grand army before he did the Congress. Even after his arrival at Yorktown he required three days to arrange his papers, preparing to deliver them in style. At length, eighteen days after the surrender of Burgoyne had taken place, he formally laid the documents concerning it before Congress, preluding them with a message in the name of Gates, but prepared the day before by himself, and following them up by comments, explanatory and eulogistic, of his own.

He evidently expected to produce a great effect by this rhetorical display, and to be signally rewarded for his good tidings, but Congress were as slow in expressing their sense of his services, as he had been in rendering them. He swelled and chafed under this neglect, but

affected to despise it. In a letter to his patron, Gates, he observes: "I have not been honored with any mark of distinction from Congress. Indeed, should I receive no testimony of their approbation of my conduct, I shall not be mortified. My hearty contempt of the world will shield me from such pitiful sensations." *

A proposal was at length made in Congress that a sword should be voted to him as the bearer of such auspicious tidings; upon which Dr. Witherspoon, a shrewd Scot, exclaimed, "I think ye'll better gie the lad *a pair of spurs.*" †

A few days put an end to Wilkinson's suspense, and probably reconciled him to the world; he was breveted a brigadier-general. A fortuitous circumstance, which we shall explain hereafter, apprised Washington about this time that a correspondence, derogatory to his military character and conduct, was going on between General Conway and General Gates. It was a parallel case with Lee's correspondence of the preceding year; and Washington conducted himself in it with the same dignified forbearance, contenting himself with letting Conway know, by the following brief note, dated November 9th, that his correspondence was detected.

"SIR,—A letter which I received last night contained the following paragraph,—'In a letter from General

* Gates' *Papers*, N. Y. Hist. Lib.

† *Life of Lord Stirling*, by W. A. Duer, p. 182.

Conway to General Gates, he says, "*Heaven has determined to save your country, or a weak general and bad counselors would have ruined it.*" '

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

The brevity of this note rendered it the more astounding. It was a hand-grenade thrown into the midst of the cabal. The effect upon other members we shall show hereafter: it seems, at first, to have prostrated Conway. An epistle of his friend Mifflin to Gates intimates, that Conway endeavored to palliate to Washington the censorious expressions in his letter, by pleading the careless freedom of language indulged in familiar letter writing; no other record of such explanation remains, and that probably was not received as satisfactory. Certain it is, he immediately sent in his resignation. To some he alleged, as an excuse for resigning, the disparaging way in which he had been spoken of by some members of Congress; to others he observed, that the campaign was at an end, and there was a prospect of a French war. The real reason he kept to himself, and Washington suffered it to remain a secret. His resignation, however, was not accepted by Congress; on the contrary, he was supported by the cabal, and was advanced to further honors, which we shall specify hereafter.

In the meantime, the cabal went on to make invidious comparisons between the achievements of the two armies,

deeply derogatory to that under Washington. Publicly, he took no notice of them; but they drew from him the following apology for his army, in a noble and characteristic letter to his friend, the celebrated Patrick Henry, then governor of Virginia. "The design of this," writes he, "is only to inform you, and with great truth I can do it, strange as it may seem, that the army which I have had under my immediate command, has not, at any one time, since General Howe's landing at the Head of Elk, been equal in point of numbers to his. In ascertaining this, I do not confine myself to continental troops, but comprehend militia. The disaffected and lukewarm in this State, in whom unhappily it too much abounds, taking advantage of the distraction in the government, prevented those vigorous exertions, which an invaded State ought to have yielded. . . . . I was left to fight two battles, in order, if possible, to save Philadelphia, with less numbers than composed the army of my antagonist, whilst the world has given us at least double. This impression, though mortifying in some points of view, I have been obliged to encourage; because, next to being strong, it is best to be thought so by the enemy; and to this cause, principally, I think is to be attributed the slow movements of General Howe.

"How different the case in the Northern Department! There the States of New York and New England, resolving to crush Burgoyne, continued pouring in their troops, till the surrender of that army; at which time not less

than fourteen thousand militia, as I have been informed, were actually in General Gates' camp, and those composed, for the most part, of the best yeomanry in the country, well armed, and in many instances supplied with provisions of their own carrying. Had the same spirit pervaded the people of this and the neighboring States, we might before this time have had General Howe nearly in the situation of General Burgoyne.

. . . . . .

"My own difficulties, in the course of the campaign, have been not a little increased by the extra aid of continental troops, which the gloomy prospect of our affairs in the north immediately after the reduction of Ticonderoga, induced me to spare from this army. But it is to be hoped that all will yet end well. IF THE CAUSE IS ADVANCED, INDIFFERENT IS IT TO ME WHERE OR IN WHAT QUARTER IT HAPPENS."

We have put the last sentence in capitals, for it speaks the whole soul of Washington. Glory with him is a secondary consideration. Let those who win, wear the laurel—sufficient for him is the advancement of the cause.

NOTE.

We subjoin an earnest appeal of Washington to Thomas Wharton, president of Pennsylvania, on the 17th of October, urging him to keep up the quota of troops demanded of the State by Congress, and to furnish additional aid. "I assure you, sir," writes he, "it is a matter of astonishment to every part of the continent to hear that Pennsylvania, the

most opulent and populous of all the States, has but twelve hundred militia in the field, at a time when the enemy are endeavoring to make themselves completely masters of, and fix their quarters in her capital." And Major-general Armstrong, commanding the Pennsylvania militia, writes at the same time to the Council of his State : "Be not deceived with wrong notions of General Washington's numbers ; be assured he wants your aid. Let the brave step forth, their example will animate the many. You all speak well of our commander-in-chief at a distance ; don't you want to see him, and pay him one generous, one martial visit, when kindly invited to his camp near the end of a long campaign ? There you will see for yourselves the unremitting zeal and toils of all the day and half the night, multiplied into years, without seeing house or home of his own, without murmur or complaint ; but believes and calls this arduous task the service of his country and of his God."

CHAPTER XXVI.

FURTHER HOSTILITIES ON THE DELAWARE.—FORT MIFFLIN ATTACKED.—BRAVELY DEFENDED.—REDUCED.—MISSION OF HAMILTON TO GATES.—VISITS THE CAMPS OF GOVERNOR CLINTON AND PUTNAM ON THE HUDSON.—PUTNAM ON HIS HOBBY-HORSE.—DIFFICULTIES IN PROCURING REINFORCEMENTS.—INTRIGUES OF THE CABAL.—LETTERS OF LOVELL AND MIFFLIN TO GATES.—THE WORKS AT RED BANK DESTROYED.—THE ENEMY IN POSSESSION OF THE DELAWARE.

THE non-arrival of reinforcements from the Northern army continued to embarrass Washington's operations. The enemy were making preparations for further attempts upon forts Mercer and Mifflin. General Howe was constructing redoubts and batteries on Province Island, on the west side of the Delaware, within five hundred yards of Fort Mifflin, and mounting them with heavy cannon. Washington consulted with his general officers what was to be done. Had the army received the expected reinforcements from the North, it might have detached sufficient force to the west side of the Schuylkill to dislodge the enemy from Province Island; but at present it would require almost the whole of the army for the purpose. This would leave the public stores at Easton, Bethlehem, and Allen-

town, uncovered, as well as several of the hospitals. It would also leave the post at Red Bank unsupported, through which Fort Mifflin was reinforced and supplied. It was determined, therefore, to await the arrival of the expected reinforcements from the North, before making any alteration in the disposition of the army. In the meantime, the garrisons of forts Mercer and Mifflin were increased, and General Varnum was stationed at Red Bank with his brigade, to be at hand to render reinforcements to either of them as occasion might require.

On the 10th of November, General Howe commenced a heavy fire upon Fort Mifflin from his batteries, which mounted eighteen, twenty-four, and thirty-two pounders. Colonel Smith doubted the competency of his feeble garrison to defend the works against a force so terribly effective, and wrote to Washington accordingly. The latter in reply represented the great importance of the works, and trusted they would be maintained to the last extremity. General Varnum was instructed to send over fresh troops occasionally to relieve those in the garrison, and to prevail upon as many as possible of the militia to go over. The latter could be employed at night upon the works to repair the damage sustained in the day, and might, if they desired it, return to Red Bank in the morning.

Washington's orders and instructions were faithfully obeyed. Major Fleury, a brave French officer, already mentioned, acquitted himself with intelligence and spirit

as engineer; but an incessant cannonade and bombardment for several days, defied all repairs. The block-houses were demolished, the palisades beaten down, the guns dismounted, the barracks reduced to ruins. Captain Treat, a young officer of great merit, who commanded the artillery, was killed, as were several non-commissioned officers and privates; and a number were wounded.

The survivors, who were not wounded, were exhausted by want of sleep, hard duty, and constant exposure to the rain. Colonel Smith himself was disabled by severe contusions, and obliged to retire to Red Bank.

The fort was in ruins; there was danger of its being carried by storm, but the gallant Fleury thought it might yet be defended with the aid of fresh troops. Such were furnished from Varnum's brigade: Lieutenant-colonel Russell, of the Connecticut line, replaced Colonel Smith. He, in his turn, was obliged to relinquish the command through fatigue and ill health, and was succeeded by Major Thayer of Rhode Island, aided by Captain (afterwards commodore) Talbot, who had distinguished himself in the preceding year by an attack on a ship of war in the Hudson. The present was an occasion that required men of desperate valor.

On the fourth day the enemy brought a large Indiaman, cut down to a floating battery, to bear upon the works; but though it opened a terrible fire, it was silenced before night. The next day several ships of war got within gunshot. Two prepared to attack it in front;

others brought their guns to bear on Fort Mercer; while two made their way into the narrow channel between Mud Island and the Pennsylvania shore, to operate with the British batteries erected there.

At a concerted signal a cannonade was opened from all quarters. The heroic little garrison stood the fire without flinching; the danger, however, was growing imminent. The batteries on Province Island enfiladed the works. The ships in the inner channel approached so near as to throw hand-grenades into the fort, while marines stationed in the round-tops stood ready to pick off any of the garrison that came in sight.

The scene now became awful; incessant firing from ships, forts, gondolas, and floating batteries, with clouds of sulphurous smoke, and the deafening thunder of cannon. Before night there was hardly a fortification to defend; palisades were shivered, guns dismounted, the whole parapet leveled. There was terrible slaughter; most of the company of artillery were destroyed. Fleury himself was wounded. Captain Talbot received a wound in the wrist, but continued bravely fighting until disabled by another wound in the hip.*

To hold out longer was impossible. Major Thayer made preparations to evacuate the fort in the night. Everything was removed in the evening, that could be conveyed away without too much exposure to the mur-

* *Life of Talbot*, by Henry T. Tuckerman, p. 31

derous fire from the round-tops. The wounded were taken over to Red Bank, accompanied by part of the garrison. Thayer remained with forty men until eleven o'clock, when they set fire to what was combustible of the fort they had so nobly defended, and crossed to Red Bank by the light of its flames.

The loss of this fort was deeply regretted by Washington, though he gave high praise to the officers and men of the garrison. Colonel Smith was voted a sword by Congress, and Fleury received the commission of lieutenant-colonel.

Washington still hoped to keep possession of Red Bank, and thereby prevent the enemy from weighing the chevaux-de-frise before the frost obliged their ships to quit the river. "I am anxiously waiting the arrival of the troops from the northward," writes he, "who ought, from the time they have had my orders, to have been here before this. Colonel Hamilton, one of my aides, is up the North River, doing all he can to push them forward, but he writes me word, that he finds many unaccountable delays thrown in his way. The want of these troops has embarrassed all my measures exceedingly."

The delays in question will best be explained by a few particulars concerning the mission of Colonel Hamilton. On his way to the head-quarters of Gates, at Albany, he found Governor Clinton and General Putnam encamped on the opposite sides of the Hudson, just above the Highlands; the governor at New Windsor, Putnam at

Fishkill. About a mile from New Windsor, Hamilton met Morgan and his riflemen, early in the morning of the 2d of November, on the march for Washington's camp, having been thus tardily detached by Gates. Hamilton urged him to hasten on with all possible despatch, which he promised to do. The colonel had expected to find matters in such a train, that he would have little to do but hurry on ample reinforcements already on the march; whereas, he found that a large part of the Northern army was to remain in and about Albany, about four thousand men to be spared to the commander-in-chief; the rest were to be stationed on the east side of the Hudson with Putnam, who had held a council of war how to dispose of them. The old general, in fact, had for some time past been haunted by a project of an attack upon New York, in which he had twice been thwarted, and for which the time seemed propitious, now that most of the British troops were reported to have gone from New York to reinforce General Howe. Hamilton rather disconcerted his project by directing him, in Washington's name, to hurry forward two continental brigades to the latter, together with Warner's militia brigade; also to order to Red Bank a body of Jersey militia about to cross to Peekskill.

Having given these directions, Hamilton hastened on to Albany. He found still less disposition on the part of Gates to furnish the troops required. There was no certainty, he said, that Sir Henry Clinton had gone to join

General Howe. There was a possibility of his returning up the river, which would expose the arsenal at Albany to destruction, should that city be left bare of troops. The New England States, too, would be left open to the ravages and depredations of the enemy; beside, it would put it out of his power to attempt anything against Ticonderoga, an undertaking of great importance, in which he might engage in the winter. In a word, Gates had schemes of his own, to which those of the commander-in-chief must give way.

Hamilton felt, he says, how embarrassing a task it was for one so young as himself to oppose the opinions and plans of a veteran, whose successes had elevated him to the highest importance; though he considered his reasonings unsubstantial, and merely calculated to "catch the Eastern people." It was with the greatest difficulty he prevailed on Gates to detach the brigades of Poor and Patterson to the aid of the commander-in-chief; and, finding reinforcements fall thus short from this quarter, he wrote to Putnam to forward an additional thousand of continental troops from his camp. "I doubt," writes he subsequently to Washington, "whether you would have had a man from the Northern army, if the whole could have been kept at Albany with any decency."

Having concluded his mission to General Gates, Hamilton returned to the camp of Governor Clinton. The worthy governor seemed the general officer best disposed in this quarter to promote the public weal, independent

of personal considerations. He had recently expressed his opinion to General Gates, that the army under Washington ought at present to be the chief object of attention, "for on its success everything worth regarding depended."

The only need of troops in this quarter at present, was to protect the country from little plundering parties, and to carry on the works necessary for the defense of the river. The latter was the governor's main thought. He was eager to reconstruct the fortresses out of which he had been so forcibly ejected; or rather to construct new ones in a better place, about West Point, where obstructions were again to be extended across the river.*

Putnam, on the contrary, wished to keep as much force as possible under his control. The old general was once more astride of what Hamilton termed his "hobby-horse," an expedition against New York. He had neglected to forward the troops which had been ordered to the South; not the least attention had been paid by him to Hamilton's order from Albany, in Washington's name, for the detachment of an additional thousand of troops. Some, which had come down from Albany, had been marched

* Governor Clinton and myself have been down to view the forts, and are both of opinion that a boom thrown across at Fort Constitution, and a battery on each side of the river, would answer a much better purpose than at Fort Montgomery, as the garrison would be reinforced by militia with more expedition, and the ground much more definable (defendable?). —Putnam to Washington, 7th Nov. 1777.—Sparks' *Cor. of the Rev.* ii 30.

by him to Tarrytown: he himself had reconnoitered the country almost down to King's Bridge, and was now advanced to the neighborhood of White Plains. "Everything," writes Hamilton, "is sacrificed to the whim of taking New York." The young colonel was perplexed how to proceed with the brave-hearted, but somewhat wrong-headed old general; who was in as bellicose a mood, now that he was mounted on his hobby, as when at the siege of Boston he mounted the prize mortar "Congress," and prayed for gunpowder.

Hamilton, in his perplexity, consulted Governor Clinton. The latter agreed with him that an attempt against New York would be a mere "suicidal parade," wasting time and men. The city at present was no object, even if it could be taken, and to take it would require men that could ill be spared from more substantial purposes. The governor, however, understood the character and humors of his old coadjutor, and in his downright way, advised Hamilton to send an order in the most emphatical terms to General Putnam, to despatch all the continental troops under him to Washington's assistance, and to detain the militia instead of them.

A little of the governor's own hobby, by the way, showed itself in his councils. "He thinks," writes Hamilton, "that there is no need of more continental troops here than a few, to give a spur to the militia in working upon the fortifications."

The "emphatical" letter of Hamilton had the effect

the governor intended. It unhorsed the belligerent veteran when in full career. The project against New York was again given up and the reinforcements reluctantly ordered to the South. "I am sorry to say," writes Hamilton, "the disposition for marching in the officers, and men in general, of these troops, does not keep pace with my wishes, or the exigency of the occasion. They have unfortunately imbibed an idea that they have done their part of the business of the campaign, and are now entitled to repose. This, and the want of pay, make them adverse to a long march at this advanced season."

Governor Clinton borrowed six thousand dollars for Hamilton, to enable him to put some of the troops in motion; "indeed," writes the colonel, "he has been the only man who has done anything to remove these difficulties." Hamilton advised that the command of the post should be given to the governor, if he would accept of it, and Putnam should be recalled; "whose blunders and caprices," said he, "are endless."

Washington, however, knew too well the innate worth and sterling patriotism of the old general, to adopt a measure that might deeply mortify him. The enterprise, too, on which the veteran had been bent, was one which he himself had approved of when suggested under other circumstances. He contented himself, therefore, with giving him a reprimand in the course of a letter, for his present dilatoriness in obeying the orders of his commander-in-chief. "I cannot but say," writes he, "there

has been more delay in the march of the troops than I think necessary; and I could wish, that in future my orders may be immediately complied with, without arguing upon the propriety of them. If any accident ensues from obeying them, the fault will be upon me, not upon you."

Washington found it more necessary than usual, at this moment, to assert his superior command, from the attempts which were being made to weaken his stand in the public estimation. Still he was not aware of the extent of the intrigues that were in progress around him, in which we believe honest Putnam had no share. There was evidently a similar game going on with that which had displaced the worthy Schuyler. The surrender of Burgoyne, though mainly the result of Washington's far-seeing plans, had suddenly trumped up Gates into a quasi rival. A letter written to Gates at the time, and still existing among his papers, lays open the spirit of the cabal. It is without signature, but in the handwriting of James Lovell, member of Congress from Massachusetts; the same who had supported Gates in opposition to Schuyler. The following are extracts: "You have saved our Northern Hemisphere; and in spite of consummate and repeated blundering, you have changed the condition of the Southern campaign, on the part of the enemy, from offensive to defensive. . . . . The campaign here must soon close; if our troops are obliged to retire to Lancaster, Reading, Bethlehem, etc.,

for winter-quarters, and the country below is laid open to the enemy's flying parties, great and very general will be the murmur—so great, so general, that nothing inferior to a commander-in-chief will be able to resist the mighty torrent of public clamor and public vengeance.

"We have had a noble army melted down by ill-judged marches—marches that disgrace the authors and directors, and which have occasioned the severest and most just sarcasm and contempt of our enemies.

"How much are you to be envied, my dear general! How different your conduct and your fortune!

"A letter from Colonel Mifflin, received at the writing of the last paragraph, gives me the disagreeable intelligence of the loss of our fort on the Delaware. You must know the consequences—loss of the river, boats, galleys, ships of war, etc.; good winter-quarters to the enemy, and a general retreat, or ill-judged, blind attempt on our part to save a gone character.

"Conway, Spotswood, Connor, Ross, and Mifflin resigned, and many other brave and good officers are preparing their letters to Congress on the same subject. In short, this army will be totally lost, unless you come down and collect the virtuous band who wish to fight under your banner and with their aid save the Southern Hemisphere. Prepare yourself for a jaunt to this place—Congress must send for you." *

* Gates' *Papers*, N. Y. Hist. Soc. Lib.

Under such baleful supervision, of which, as we have observed, he was partly conscious, but not to its full extent, Washington was obliged to carry on a losing game, in which the very elements seemed to conspire against him.

In the meantime, Sir William Howe was following up the reduction of Fort Mifflin by an expedition against Fort Mercer, which still impeded the navigation of the Delaware. On the 17th of November, Lord Cornwallis was detached with two thousand men to cross from Chester into the Jerseys, where he would be joined by a force advancing from New York.

Apprised of this movement, Washington detached General Huntington, with a brigade, to join Varnum at Red Bank. General Greene was also ordered to repair thither with his division, and an express was sent off to General Glover, who was on his way through the Jerseys with his brigade, directing him to file off to the left towards the same point. These troops, with such militia as could be collected, Washington hoped would be sufficient to save the fort. Before they could form a junction, however, and reach their destination, Cornwallis appeared before it. A defense against such superior force was hopeless. The works were abandoned; they were taken possession of by the enemy, who proceeded to destroy them. After the destruction had been accomplished, the reinforcements from the North, so long and so anxiously expected, and so shamefully delayed, made their appearance.

"Had they arrived but ten days sooner," writes Washington to his brother, "it would, I think, have put it in my power to save Fort Mifflin, which defended the chevaux-de-frise, and consequently have rendered Philadelphia a very ineligible situation for the enemy this winter."

The troops arrived in ragged plight, owing to the derangement of the commissariat. A part of Morgan's rifle corps was absolutely unable to take the field for want of shoes, and such was the prevalent want in this particular, that ten dollars reward was offered in general orders for a model of the best substitute for shoes that could be made out of raw hides.

The evil which Washington had so anxiously striven to prevent had now been effected. The American vessels stationed in the river had lost all protection. Some of the galleys escaped past the batteries of Philadelphia in a fog, and took refuge in the upper part of the Delaware; the rest were set on fire by their crews and abandoned.

The enemy were now in possession of the river, but it was too late in the season to clear away the obstructions, and open a passage for the large ships. All that could be effected at present, was to open a sufficient channel for transports and vessels of easy burden, to bring provisions and supplies for the army.

Washington advised the navy board, now that the enemy had command of the river, to have all the American

frigates scuttled and sunk immediately. The board objected to sinking them, but said they should be ballasted and plugged, ready to be sunk in case of attack. Washington warned them that an attack would be sudden, so as to get possession of them before they could be sunk or destroyed; his advice and warning were unheeded; the consequences will hereafter be shown.

CHAPTER XXVII.

QUESTION OF AN ATTACK ON PHILADELPHIA.—GENERAL REED AT HEAD-QUARTERS.—ENEMY'S WORKS RECONNOITERED.—OPINIONS IN A COUNCIL OF WAR.—EXPLOIT OF LAFAYETTE.—RECEIVES COMMAND OF A DIVISION.—MODIFICATION OF THE BOARD OF WAR.—GATES TO PRESIDE.—LETTER OF LOVELL.—SALLY FORTH OF GENERAL HOWE.—EVOLUTIONS AND SKIRMISHES.—CONWAY INSPECTOR-GENERAL.—CONSULTATION ABOUT WINTER-QUARTERS.—DREARY MARCH TO VALLEY FORGE.—HUTTING.—WASHINGTON'S VINDICATORY LETTERS.—RETROSPECT OF THE YEAR.

N the evening of the 24th of November Washington reconnoitered, carefully and thoughtfully, the lines and defenses about Philadelphia, from the opposite side of the Schuylkill. His army was now considerably reinforced; the garrison was weakened by the absence of a large body of troops under Lord Cornwallis in the Jerseys. Some of the general officers thought this an advantageous moment for an attack upon the city. Such was the opinion of Lord Stirling, and especially General Wayne, Mad Anthony, as he was familiarly called, always eager for some daring enterprise. The recent victory at Saratoga had dazzled the public mind, and produced a general impatience for something equally striking and effective in this quarter. Reed,

Washington's former secretary, now a brigadier-general, shared largely in this feeling. He had written a letter to Gates, congratulating him on having "reduced his proud and insolent enemy to the necessity of laying his arms at his feet;" assuring him that it would "enroll his name with the happy few who shine in history, not as conquerors, but as distinguished generals. I have for sometime," adds he, "volunteered with this army, which, notwithstanding the labors and efforts of its amiable chief, has yet gathered no laurels." *

Reed was actually at head-quarters as a volunteer, again enjoying much of Washington's confidence, and anxious that he should do something to meet the public wishes. Washington was aware of this prevalent feeling, and that it was much wrought on by the intrigues of designing men, and by the sarcasms of the press. He was now reconnoitering the enemy's works to judge of the policy of the proposed attack. "A vigorous exertion is under consideration," writes Reed; "God grant it may be successful!" †

Everything in the neighborhood of the enemy's lines bore traces of the desolating hand of war. Several houses, owned probably by noted patriots, had been demolished; others burnt. Villas stood roofless; their doors and windows, and all the woodwork, had been carried off to make huts for the artillery. Nothing but bare walls

* Reed to Gates. Gates' *Papers*.
† Reed to President Wharton.

remained. Gardens had been trampled down and destroyed; not a fence nor fruit-tree was to be seen. The gathering gloom of a November evening heightened the sadness of this desolation.

With an anxious eye Washington scrutinized the enemy's works. They appeared to be exceedingly strong. A chain of redoubts extended along the most commanding ground from the Schuylkill to the Delaware. They were framed, planked, and of great thickness, and were surrounded by a deep ditch, inclosed and fraised. The intervals were filled with an abatis, in constructing which all the apple-trees of the neighborhood, besides forest trees, had been sacrificed.*

The idea of Lord Stirling and those in favor of an attack, was, that it should be at different points at daylight; the main body to attack the lines to the north of the city, while Greene, embarking his men in boats at Dunk's Ferry, and passing down the Delaware, and Potter, with a body of Continentals and militia, moving down the west side of the Schuylkill, should attack the eastern and western fronts.

Washington saw that there was an opportunity for a brilliant blow, that might satisfy the impatience of the public, and silence the sarcasms of the press; but he saw that it must be struck at the expense of a fearful loss of life.

* *Life and Cor. of Reed*, vol. i. p. 341.

Returning to camp, he held a council of war of his principal officers, in which the matter was debated at great length and with some warmth; but without coming to a decision. At breaking up, Washington requested that each member of the council would give his opinion the next morning in writing, and he sent off a messenger in the night for the written opinion of General Greene.

Only four members of the council, Stirling, Wayne, Scott, and Woodford, were in favor of an attack; of which Lord Stirling drew up the plan. Eleven (including Greene) were against it, objecting, among other things, that the enemy's lines were too strong and too well supported, and their force too numerous, well disciplined and experienced, to be assailed without great loss and the hazard of a failure.

Had Washington been actuated by mere personal ambition and a passion for military fame, or had he yielded to the goadings of faction and the press, he might have disregarded the loss and hazarded the failure; but his patriotism was superior to his ambition; he shrank from a glory that must be achieved at such a cost, and the idea of an attack was abandoned.

General Reed, in a letter to Thomas Wharton, president of Pennsylvania, endeavors to prevent the caviling of that functionary and his co-legislators, who, though they had rendered very slender assistance in the campaign, were extremely urgent for some striking achievement. "From my own feelings," writes he, "I can easily

judge of yours and the gentlemen round, at the seeming inactivity of this army for so long a time. I know it is peculiarly irksome to the general, whose own judgment led to more vigorous measures; but there has been so great a majority of his officers opposed to every enterprising plan, as fully justifies his conduct." At the same time Reed confesses that he himself concurs with the great majority, who deemed an attack upon Philadelphia too hazardous.

A letter from General Greene received about this time, gave Washington most gratifying intelligence about his youthful friend, the Marquis de Lafayette. Though not quite recovered from the wound received at the battle of Brandywine, he had accompanied General Greene as a volunteer in his expedition into the Jerseys, and had been indulged by him with an opportunity of gratifying his belligerent humor, in a brush with Cornwallis' outposts. "The marquis," writes Greene, "with about four hundred militia and the rifle corps, attacked the enemy's picket last evening, killed about twenty, wounded many more, and took about twenty prisoners. The marquis is charmed with the spirited behavior of the militia and rifle corps; they drove the enemy about half a mile, and kept the ground until dark. The enemy's picket consisted of about three hundred, and were reinforced during the skirmish. The marquis is determined to be in the way of danger."*

* Washington's *Writings*. Sparks, vol. v. p. 171.

Lafayette himself, at the request of Greene, wrote an animated yet modest account of the affair to Washington. "I wish," observes he, "that this little success of ours may please you; though a very trifling one, I find it very interesting on account of the behavior of our soldiers." *

Washington had repeatedly written to Congress in favor of giving the marquis a command equal to his nominal rank, in consideration of his illustrious and important connections, the attachment he manifested to the cause, and the discretion and good sense he had displayed on various occasions. "I am convinced," said he, "he possesses a large share of that military ardor which generally characterizes the nobility of his country."

Washington availed himself of the present occasion to support his former recommendations, by transmitting to Congress an account of Lafayette's youthful exploit. He received, in return, an intimation from that body, that it was their pleasure he should appoint the marquis to the command of a division in the Continental Army. The division of General Stephen at this time was vacant; that veteran officer, who had formerly won honor for himself in the French war, having been dismissed for misconduct at the battle of Germantown, the result of intemperate habits, into which he unfortunately had fallen. Lafayette was forthwith appointed to the command of that division.

* *Memoirs of Lafayette*, vol. i. p. 122.

At this juncture (November 27th) a modification took place in the Board of War, indicative of the influence which was operating in Congress. It was increased from three to five members: General Mifflin, Joseph Trumbull, Richard Peters, Colonel Pickering, and last, though certainly not least, General Gates. Mifflin's resignation of the commission of quartermaster-general had recently been accepted; but that of major-general was continued to him, though without pay. General Gates was appointed president of the board, and the President of Congress was instructed to express to him, in communicating the intelligence, the high sense which that body entertained of his abilities, and peculiar fitness to discharge the duties of that important office, upon the right execution of which the success of the American cause so eminently depended; and to inform him it was their intention to continue his rank as major-general, and that he might officiate at the board or in the field, as occasion might require; furthermore, that he should repair to Congress with all convenient despatch, to enter upon the duties of his appointment. It was evidently the idea of the cabal that Gates was henceforth to be the master-spirit of the war. His friend Lovell, chairman of the committee of foreign relations, writes to him on the same day to urge him on. "We want you at different places; but we want you most near Germantown. Good God! What a situation we are in; how different from what might have been justly expected! You will be aston-

ished when you know accurately what numbers have at one time and another been collected near Philadelphia, to wear out stockings, shoes, and breeches. Depend upon it, for every ten soldiers placed under the command of our Fabius, five recruits will be wanted annually during the war. The brave fellows at Fort Mifflin and Red Bank have despaired of succor, and been obliged to quit. The naval departments have fallen into circumstances of seeming disgrace. Come to the Board of War, if only for a short season. . . . . If it was not for the defeat of Burgoyne, and the strong appearance of a European war, our affairs are Fabiused into a very disagreeable posture." *

While busy faction was thus at work, both in and out of Congress, to undermine the fame and authority of Washington, General Howe, according to his own threat, was preparing to " drive him beyond the mountains."

On the 4th of December, Captain Allen McLane, a vigilant officer already mentioned, of the Maryland line, brought word to head-quarters, that an attack was to be made that very night on the camp at White Marsh. Washington made his dispositions to receive the meditated assault, and, in the meantime, detached McLane with one hundred men to reconnoiter. The latter met the van of the enemy about eleven o'clock at night, on the Germantown road; attacked it at the Three Mile

* Gates' *Papers*, N. Y. Hist. Soc. Lib.

Run, forced it to change its line of march, and hovered about and impeded it throughout the night. About three o'clock in the morning the alarm-gun announced the approach of the enemy. They appeared at daybreak, and encamped on Chestnut Hill, within three miles of Washington's right wing. Brigadier-general James Irvine, with six hundred of the Pennsylvania militia, was sent out to skirmish with their light advanced parties. He encountered them at the foot of the hill, but after a short conflict, in which several were killed and wounded, his troops gave way and fled in all directions, leaving him and four or five of his men wounded on the field, who were taken prisoners.

General Howe passed the day in reconnoitering, and at night changed his ground, and moved to a hill on the left, and within a mile of the American line. It was his wish to have a general action, but to have it on advantageous terms. He had scrutinized Washington's position and pronounced it inaccessible. For three days he manœuvred to draw him from it, shifting his own position occasionally, but still keeping on advantageous ground. Washington was not to be decoyed. He knew the vast advantages which superior science, discipline, and experience, gave the enemy in open field fight, and remained within his lines. All his best officers approved of his policy. Several sharp skirmishes occurred at Edge Hill and elsewhere, in which Morgan's riflemen and the Maryland militia were concerned. There was loss on

both sides, but the Americans gave way before a great superiority of numbers.

In one of these skirmishes General Reed had a narrow escape. He was reconnoitering the enemy at Washington's request, when he fell in with some of the Pennsylvania militia who had been scattered, and endeavored to rally and lead them forward. His horse was shot through the head, and came with him to the ground; the enemy's flankers were running to bayonet him, as he was recovering from his fall, when Captain Allen McLane came up with his men in time to drive them off and rescue him. He was conveyed from the field by a light horseman.*

On the 7th there was every appearance that Howe meditated an attack on the left wing. Washington's heart now beat high, and he prepared for a warm and decisive action. In the course of the day he rode through every brigade, giving directions how the attack was to be met, and exhorting his troops to depend mainly on the bayonet. His men were inspirited by his words, but still more by his looks, so calm and determined; for the soldier regards the demeanor more than the words of his general in the hour of peril.

The day wore away with nothing but skirmishes, in which Morgan's riflemen, and the Maryland militia under Colonel Gist, rendered good service. An attack was

* *Life and Cor. of Reed*, vol. i. p. 351.

expected in the night, or early in the morning; but no attack took place. The spirit manifested by the Americans in their recent contests, had rendered the British commanders cautious.

The next day, in the afternoon, the enemy were again in motion; but instead of advancing, filed off to the left, halted, and lit up a long string of fires on the heights; behind which they retreated, silently and precipitately, in the night. By the time Washington received intelligence of their movement, they were in full march by two or three routes for Philadelphia. He immediately detached light parties to fall upon their rear, but they were too far on the way for any but light horse to overtake them.

An intelligent observer writes to President Wharton from the camp: "As all their movements, added to their repeated declarations of driving General Washington over the Blue Mountains, were calculated to assure us of their having come out with the determination to fight, it was thought prudent to keep our post upon the hills, near the church. I understand it was resolved, if they did not begin the attack soon, to have fought them at all events, it not being supposed that they could, consistent with their own feelings, have secretly stolen into the city so suddenly after so long gasconading on what they intended to do." *

* Letter of Elias Boudinot, Commissary of Prisoners, to President Wharton. *Life and Cor. of Reed,* vol. i. p. 351.

Here then was another occasion of which the enemies of Washington availed themselves to deride his cautious policy. Yet it was clearly dictated by true wisdom. His heart yearned for a general encounter with the enemy. In his despatch to the President of Congress, he writes, "I sincerely wish that they had made an attack; as the issue, in all probability, from the disposition of our troops and the strong situation of our camp, would have been fortunate and happy. At the same time I must add, that reason, prudence, and every principle of policy forbade us from quitting our post to attack them. Nothing but success would have justified the measure; and this could not be expected from their position."

At this time, one of the earliest measures recommended by the Board of War, and adopted by Congress, showed the increasing influence of the cabal; two inspectors-general were to be appointed for the promotion of discipline and reformation of abuses in the army; and one of the persons chosen for this important office was Conway, with the rank, too, of major-general! This was tacitly in defiance of the opinion so fully expressed by Washington of the demerits of the man, and the ruinous effects to be apprehended from his promotion over the heads of brigadiers of superior claims. Conway, however, was the secret colleague of Gates, and Gates was now the rising sun.

Winter had now set in with all its severity. The troops, worn down by long and hard service, had need

of repose. Poorly clad, also, and almost destitute of blankets, they required a warmer shelter than mere tents against the inclemencies of the season. The nearest towns which would afford winter-quarters, were Lancaster, York, and Carlisle; but should the army retire to any one of these, a large and fertile district would be exposed to be foraged by the foe, and its inhabitants, perhaps, to be dragooned into submission.

Much anxiety was felt by the Pennsylvania Legislature on the subject, who were desirous that the army should remain in the field. General Reed, in a letter to the president of that body, writes: "A line of winter-quarters had been proposed and supported by some of his [Washington's] principal officers; but I believe I may assure you he will not come into it, but take post as near the enemy, and cover as much of the country as the nakedness and wretched condition of some part of the army will admit. To keep the field entirely is impracticable, and so you would think if you saw the plight we were in. You will soon know the plan, and as it has been adopted principally upon the opinions of the gentlemen of this State, I hope it will give satisfaction to you and the gentlemen around you. If it is not doing what we would, it is doing what we can; and I must say the general has shown a truly feeling and patriotic respect for us on this occasion, in which you would agree with me, if you knew all the circumstances."

The plan adopted by Washington, after holding a

council of war, and weighing the discordant opinions of his officers, was to hut the army for the winter at Valley Forge, in Chester County, on the west side of the Schuylkill, about twenty miles from Philadelphia. Here he would be able to keep a vigilant eye on that city, and at the same time protect a great extent of country.

Sad and dreary was the march to Valley Forge; uncheered by the recollection of any recent triumph, as was the march to winter-quarters in the preceding year. Hungry and cold were the poor fellows who had so long been keeping the field; for provisions were scant, clothing worn out, and so badly off were they for shoes, that the footsteps of many might be tracked in blood. Yet at this very time we are told, "hogsheads of shoes, stockings, and clothing, were lying at different places on the roads and in the woods, perishing for want of teams, or of money to pay the teamsters." *

Such were the consequences of the derangement of the commissariat.

Arrived at Valley Forge on the 17th, the troops had still to brave the wintry weather in their tents, until they could cut down trees and construct huts for their accommodation. Those who were on the sick list had to seek temporary shelter wherever it could be found, among the farmers of the neighborhood. According to the regulations in the orderly book, each hut was to be fourteen

* Gordon's *Hist. Am. War*, vol. ii. p. 279.

feet by sixteen, with walls of logs filled in with clay, six feet and a half high; the fireplaces were of logs plastered; and logs split into rude planks or slabs furnished the roofing. A hut was allotted to twelve non-commissioned officers and soldiers. A general officer had a hut to himself. The same was allowed to the staff of each brigade and regiment, and the field-officer of each regiment; and a hut to the commissioned officers of each company. The huts of the soldiery fronted on streets. Those of the officers formed a line in the rear, and the encampment gradually assumed the look of a rude military village.

Scarce had the troops been two days employed in these labors, when, before daybreak on the 22d, word was brought that a body of the enemy had made a sortie toward Chester, apparently on a foraging expedition. Washington issued orders to Generals Huntington and Varnum to hold their troops in readiness to march against them. Their replies bespeak the forlorn state of the army. "Fighting will be far preferable to starving," writes Huntington. "My brigade are out of provisions, nor can the commissary obtain any meat. I have used every argument my imagination can invent to make the soldiers easy, but I despair of being able to do it much longer."

"It's a very pleasing circumstance to the division under my command," writes Varnum, "that there is a probability of their marching; three days successively we

have been destitute of bread. Two days we have been entirely without meat. The men must be supplied, or they cannot be commanded."

In fact, a dangerous mutiny had broken out among the famishing troops in the preceding night, which their officers had had great difficulty in quelling.

Washington instantly wrote to the President of Congress on the subject. "I do not know from what cause this alarming deficiency or rather total failure of supplies arises; but unless more vigorous exertions and better regulations take place in that line (the commissaries' department) immediately, the army must dissolve. I have done all in my power by remonstrating, by writing, by ordering the commissaries on this head, from time to time; but without any good effect, or obtaining more than a present scanty relief. Owing to this, the march of the army has been delayed on more than one interesting occasion, in the course of the present campaign; and had a body of the enemy crossed the Schuylkill this morning, as I had reason to expect, the divisions which I ordered to be in readiness to march and meet them could not have moved."

Scarce had Washington despatched this letter, when he learnt that the Legislature of Pennsylvania had addressed a remonstrance to Congress against his going into winter-quarters, instead of keeping in the open field. This letter, received in his forlorn situation, surrounded by an unhoused, scantily clad, half-starved army, shiver-

ing in the midst of December's snow and cold, put an end to his forbearance, and drew from him another letter to the President of Congress, dated on the 23d, which we shall largely quote; not only for its manly and truthful eloquence, but for the exposition it gives of the difficulties of his situation, mainly caused by unwise and intermeddling legislation.

And first as to the commissariat:—

"Though I have been tender, heretofore," writes he, "of giving any opinion, or lodging complaints, as the change in that department took place contrary to my judgment, and the consequences thereof were predicted; yet, finding that the inactivity of the army, whether for want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials, is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar, but by those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth, then, I can declare, that no man, in my opinion, ever had his measures more impeded than I have by every department of the army.

"Since the month of July, we have had no assistance from the quartermaster-general; and to want of assistance from this department, the commissary-general charges great part of his deficiency. To this I am to add, that notwithstanding it is a standing order, and often repeated, that the troops shall always have two days' provisions by them, that they might be ready at any sudden call; yet an opportunity has scarcely ever offered of taking an advantage of the enemy, that it has not been either to-

tally obstructed, or greatly impeded on this account. . . . . As a proof of the little benefit received from a clothier-general, as a further proof of the inability of an army, under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of soldiers (besides a number of men confined to hospitals for want of shoes, and others in farmers' houses on the same account), we have, by a field return this day made, no less than two thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight men, now in camp unfit for duty, because they are barefoot, and otherwise naked. By the same return, it appears that our whole strength in continental troops, including the Eastern brigades, which have joined us since the surrender of General Burgoyne, exclusive of the Maryland troops sent to Wilmington, amounts to no more than eight thousand two hundred in camp fit for duty; notwithstanding which, and that since the 4th instant, our numbers fit for duty, from the hardships and exposures they have undergone, particularly on account of blankets (numbers have been obliged, and still are, to sit up all night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural and common way), have decreased near two thousand men.

"We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter-quarters or not (for I am sure no resolution of mine could warrant the remonstrance), reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks or stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow; and moreover, as if

they conceived it easily practicable for an inferior army, under the disadvantages I described ours to be—which are by no means exaggerated—to confine a superior one, in all respects well appointed and provided for a winter's campaign, within the city of Philadelphia, and to cover from depredation and waste the States of Pennsylvania and Jersey. But what makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye, is, that these very gentlemen, who were well apprised of the nakedness of the troops from ocular demonstration, who thought their own soldiers worse clad than others, and who advised me near a month ago to postpone the execution of a plan I was about to adopt, in consequence of a resolve in Congress for seizing clothes, under strong assurances that an ample supply would be collected in ten days, agreeably to a decree of the State (not one article of which, by the by, is yet come to hand), should think a winter's campaign, and the covering of those States from the invasion of an enemy, so easy and practicable a business. I can assure those gentlemen, that it is a much easier, and less distressing thing, to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel abundantly for them, and, from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve nor prevent.

"It is for these reasons, therefore, that I have dwelt

upon the subject; and it adds not a little to my other difficulties and distress, to find that much more is expected from me than is possible to be performed, and that, upon the ground of safety and policy, I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army from public view, and thereby expose myself to detraction and calumny."

In the present exigency, to save his camp from desolation, and to relieve his starving soldiery, he was compelled to exercise the authority recently given him by Congress, to forage the country round, seize supplies wherever he could find them, and pay for them in money or in certificates redeemable by Congress. He exercised these powers with great reluctance; rurally inclined himself, he had a strong sympathy with the cultivators of the soil, and ever regarded the yeomanry with a paternal eye. He was apprehensive, moreover, of irritating the jealousy of military sway, prevalent throughout the country, and of corrupting the morals of the army. "Such procedures," writes he to the President of Congress, "may give a momentary relief; but if repeated, will prove of the most pernicious consequence. Beside spreading disaffection, jealousy, and fear among the people, they never fail, even in the most veteran troops, under the most rigid and exact discipline, to raise in the soldiery a disposition to licentiousness, to plunder and robbery, difficult to suppress afterward, and which has proved not only ruinous to the inhabitants, but in many instances to armies themselves. I regret the occasion that compelled us to the

measure the other day, and shall consider it the greatest of our misfortunes if we should be under the necessity of practicing it again."

How truly, in all these trying scenes of his military career, does the patriot rise above the soldier!

With these noble and high-spirited appeals to Congress, we close Washington's operations for 1777; one of the most arduous and eventful years of his military life, and one of the most trying to his character and fortunes. He began it with an empty army chest, and a force dwindled down to four thousand half-disciplined men. Throughout the year he had had to contend, not merely with the enemy, but with the parsimony and meddlesome interference of Congress. In his most critical times that body had left him without funds and without reinforcements. It had made some promotions contrary to his advice, and contrary to military usage, thereby wronging and disgusting some of his bravest officers. It had changed the commissariat in the very midst of a campaign, and thereby thrown the whole service into confusion.

Among so many cross-purposes and discouragements, it was a difficult task for Washington to "keep the life and soul of the army together." Yet he had done so. Marvelous indeed was the manner in which he had soothed the discontents of his aggrieved officers, and reconciled them to an ill-requiting service; and still more marvelous the manner in which he had breathed his own spirit of patience and perseverance in his yeo-

man soldiery, during their sultry marchings and countermarchings through the Jerseys, under all kinds of privations, with no visible object of pursuit to stimulate their ardor, hunting, as it were, the rumored appariticns of an unseen fleet.

All this time, too, while endeavoring to ascertain and counteract the operations of Lord Howe upon the ocean, and his brother upon the land, he was directing and aiding military measures against Burgoyne in the North. Three games were in a manner going on under his supervision. The operations of the commander-in-chief are not always most obvious to the public eye; victories may be planned in his tent, of which subordinate generals get the credit; and most of the moves which ended in giving a triumphant check to Burgoyne, may be traced to Washington's shifting camp in the Jerseys.

It has been an irksome task in some of the preceding chapters, to notice the under-current of intrigue and management by which some part of this year's campaign was disgraced; yet even-handed justice requires that such machinations should be exposed. We have shown how successful they were in displacing the noble-hearted Schuyler from the head of the Northern department; the same machinations were now at work to undermine the commander-in-chief, and elevate the putative hero of Saratoga on his ruins. He was painfully aware of them; yet in no part of the war did he more thoroughly evince that magnanimity which was his grand characteristic,

than in the last scenes of this campaign, where he rose above the tauntings of the press, the sneerings of the cabal, the murmurs of the public, the suggestions of some of his friends, and the throbbing impulses of his own courageous heart, and adhered to that Fabian policy which he considered essential to the safety of the cause. To dare is often the impulse of selfish ambition or hare-brained valor: to forbear is at times the proof of real greatness.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GATES IN THE ASCENDANT.—THE CONWAY LETTER.—SUSPICIONS.—CONSEQUENT CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GATES AND WASHINGTON.—WARNING LETTER FROM DR. CRAIK.—ANONYMOUS LETTERS.—PROJECTED EXPEDITION TO CANADA.—LAFAYETTE, GATES, AND THE BOARD OF WAR.

WHILE censure and detraction had thus dogged Washington throughout his harassing campaign, and followed him to his forlorn encampment at Valley Forge, Gates was the constant theme of popular eulogium, and was held up by the cabal, as the only one capable of retrieving the desperate fortunes of the South. Letters from his friends in Congress urged him to hasten on, take his seat at the head of the Board of War, assume the management of military affairs, and *save the country!*

Gates was not a strong-minded man. Is it a wonder, then, that his brain should be bewildered by the fumes of incense offered up on every side? In the midst of his triumph, however, while feasting on the sweets of adulation, came the withering handwriting on the wall! It is an epistle from his friend Mifflin. "My dear General," writes he, "an extract from Conway's letter to you has been procured and sent to head-quarters. The extract

was a collection of just sentiments, yet such as should not have been intrusted to any of your family. General Washington inclosed it to Conway without remarks. . . . . My dear General, take care of your sincerity and frank disposition; they cannot injure yourself, but may injure some of your best friends. Affectionately yours."

Nothing could surpass the trouble and confusion of mind of Gates on the perusal of this letter. Part of his correspondence with Conway had been sent to headquarters. But what part? What was the purport and extent of the alleged extracts? How had they been obtained? Who had sent them? Mifflin's letter specified nothing; and this silence as to particulars, left an unbounded field for tormenting conjecture. In fact, Mifflin knew nothing in particular when he wrote; nor did any of the cabal. The laconic nature of Washington's note to Conway had thrown them all in confusion. None knew the extent of the correspondence discovered, nor how far they might be individually compromised.

Gates, in his perplexity, suspected that his portfolio had been stealthily opened and his letters copied. But which of them?—and by whom? He wrote to Conway and Mifflin, anxiously inquiring what part of their correspondence had been thus surreptitiously obtained, and "who was the villain that had played him this treacherous trick. There is scarcely a man living," says he, "who takes a greater care of his letters than I do. I never fail to lock them up, and keep the key in my pocket. . . .

No punishment is too severe for the wretch who betrayed me; and I doubt not your friendship for me, as well as your zeal for our safety, will bring the name of this miscreant to light." *

Gates made rigid inquiries among the gentlemen of his staff; all disavowed any knowledge of the matter. In the confusion and perturbation of his mind, his suspicions glanced, or were turned, upon Colonel Hamilton, as the channel of communication, he having had free access to head-quarters during his late mission from the commander-in-chief. In this state of mental trepidation, Gates wrote, on the 8th of December, the following letter to Washington:

"SIR,—I shall not attempt to describe what, as a private gentleman, I cannot help feeling, on representing to my mind the disagreeable situation in which confidential letters, when exposed to public inspection, may place an unsuspecting correspondent; but, as a public officer, I conjure your Excellency to give me all the assistance you can in tracing the author of the infidelity which put extracts from General Conway's letters to me into your hands. Those letters have been stealingly copied, but which of them, when, and by whom, is to me as yet an unfathomable secret. . . . . It is, I believe, in your Excellency's power to do me and the United States a very important service, by detecting a wretch who may

* Gates' *Papers*, N. Y. Hist. Lib.

betray me, and capitally injure the very operations under your immediate directions. . . . . The crime being eventually so important, that the least loss of time may be attended with the worst consequences, and it being unknown to me whether the letter came to you from a member of Congress, or from an officer, I shall have the honor of transmitting a copy of this to the president, that the Congress may, in concert with your Excellency, obtain as soon as possible a discovery which so deeply affects the safety of the States. Crimes of that magnitude ought not to remain unpunished." A copy of this letter was transmitted by Gates to the President of Congress.

Washington replied with characteristic dignity and candor. "Your letter of the 8th ultimo," writes he (January 4th), "came to my hand a few days ago, and, to my great surprise, informed me that a copy of it had been sent to Congress, for what reason I find myself unable to account; but, as some end was doubtless intended to be answered by it, I am laid under the disagreeable necessity of returning my answer through the same channel, lest any member of that honorable body should harbor an unfavorable suspicion of my having practiced some indirect means to come at the contents of the confidential letters between you and General Conway.

"I am to inform you, then, that Colonel Wilkinson, on his way to Congress, in the month of October last, fell in with Lord Stirling at Reading, and, not in confidence, that I ever understood, informed his aide-de-camp, Major

McWilliams, that General Conway had written this to you: 'Heaven has been determined to save your country, or a weak general and bad counselors would have ruined it.' Lord Stirling, from motives of friendship, transmitted the account, with this remark, 'The inclosed was communicated by Colonel Wilkinson to Major McWilliams. Such wicked duplicity of conduct I shall always think it my duty to detect.'"

Washington adds, that the letter written by him to Conway was merely to show that gentleman that he was not unapprised of his intriguing disposition. "Neither this letter," continues he, "nor the information which occasioned it, was ever directly or indirectly communicated by me to a single officer in this army, out of my own family, excepting the Marquis de Lafayette, who, having been spoken to on the subject by General Conway, applied for and saw, under injunctions of secrecy, the letter which contained Wilkinson's information; so desirous was I of concealing every matter that could, in its consequences, give the smallest interruption to the tranquillity of this army, or afford a gleam of hope to the enemy by dissensions therein." . . . . "Till Lord Stirling's letter came to my hands, I never knew that General Conway, whom I viewed in the light of a stranger to you, was a correspondent of yours: much less did I suspect that I was the subject of your confidential letters. Pardon me, then, for adding, that so far from conceiving the safety of the States can be affected, or in the smallest degree

injured, by a discovery of this kind, or that I should be called upon in such solemn terms to point out the author, I considered the information as coming from yourself, and given to forewarn, and consequently to forearm me, against a secret enemy, or in other words, a dangerous incendiary; in which character, sooner or later, this country will know General Conway. But in this, as in other matters of late, I have found myself mistaken."

This clear and ample answer explained the enigma of the laconic note to Conway, and showed that the betrayal of the defamatory correspondence was due to the babbling of Wilkinson. Following the mode adopted by Gates, Washington transmitted his reply through the hands of the President of Congress, and thus this matter, which he had generously kept secret, became blazoned before Congress and the world.

A few days after writing the above letter, Washington received the following warning from his old and faithful friend, Dr. Craik, dated from Maryland, January 6th. "Notwithstanding your unwearied diligence and the unparalleled sacrifice of domestic happiness and ease of mind which you have made for the good of your country, yet you are not wanting in secret enemies, who would rob you of the great and truly deserved esteem your country has for you. Base and villainous men, through chagrin, envy, or ambition, are endeavoring to lessen you in the minds of the people, and taking underhand methods to traduce your character. The morning I left camp, I was

informed that a strong faction was forming against you in the new Board of War, and in the Congress. . . . . The method they are taking is by holding General Gates up to the people, and making them believe that you have had a number three or four times greater than the enemy, and have done nothing; that Philadelphia was given up by your management, and that you have had many opportunities of defeating the enemy. It is said they dare not appear openly as your enemies; but that the new Board of War is composed of such leading men, as will throw such obstacles and difficulties in your way as to force you to resign." *

An anonymous letter to Patrick Henry, dated from Yorktown, January 12th, says among other things, "We have only passed the Red Sea; a dreary wilderness is still before us, and unless a Moses or a Joshua are raised up in our behalf, we must perish before we reach the promised land. . . . . But is our case desperate? By no means. We have wisdom, virtue, and strength enough to save us, if they could be called into action. The northern army has shown us what Americans are capable of doing with a general at their head. The spirit of the southern army is no way inferior to the spirit of the northern. A Gates, a Lee, or a Conway, would in a few weeks render them an irresistible body of men.

"The last of the above officers has accepted of the new

* Sparks. *Washington's Writings*, vol. v. p. 493.

office of inspector-general of our army, in order to reform abuses; but the remedy is only a palliative one. In one of his letters to a friend, he says, 'a great and good God hath decreed America to be free, or the [general] and weak counselors would have ruined her long ago.' " *

Another anonymous paper, probably by the same hand, dated January 17th, and sent to Congress, under a cover directed to the president, Mr. Laurens, decried all the proceedings of the southern army, declaring that the proper method of attacking, beating, and conquering the enemy, had never as yet been adopted by the commander-in-chief; that the late success to the northward was owing to a change of the commanders; that the southern army would have been alike successful had a similar change taken place. After dwelling on the evils and derangements prevalent in every department, it draws the conclusion, "That the head cannot possibly be sound, when the whole body is disordered; that the people of America have been guilty of idolatry, by making a man their God, and the God of heaven and earth will convince them by woful experience, that he is only a man; that no good may be expected from the standing army until Baal and his worshippers are banished from the camp." †

Instead of laying this mischievous paper before Congress, Mr. Laurens remitted it to Washington. He re-

* Sparks. *Washington's Writings*, vol. v. p. 493.
† *Ibid.*, p. 497.,

ceived the following reply: "I cannot sufficiently express the obligations I feel to you for your friendship and politeness, upon an occasion in which I am so deeply interested. I was not unapprised that a malignant faction had been for some time forming to my prejudice; which, conscious as I am of having ever done all in my power to answer the important purposes of the trust reposed in me, could not but give me some pain on a personal account. But my chief concern arises from an apprehension of the dangerous consequences which intestine dissensions may produce to the common cause.

"My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defense I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however, injurious, without disclosing secrets which it is of the utmost moment to conceal. But why should I expect to be exempt from censure, the unfailing lot of an elevated station? Merit and talent, with which I can have no pretensions of rivalship, have ever been subject to it. My heart tells me, that it has ever been my unremitted aim to do the best that circumstances would permit; yet I may have been very often mistaken in my judgment of the means, and may in many instances deserve the imputation of error."

Gates was disposed to mark his advent to power by a striking operation. A notable project had been con-

certed by him and the Board of War for a winter irruption into Canada. An expedition was to proceed from Albany, cross Lake Champlain on the ice, burn the British shipping at St. John's, and press forward to Montreal. Washington was not consulted in the matter: the project was submitted to Congress, and sanctioned by them without his privity.

One object of the scheme was to detach the Marquis de Lafayette from Washington, to whom he was devotedly attached, and bring him into the interests of the cabal. For this purpose he was to have the command of the expedition, an appointment which it was thought would tempt his military ambition. Conway was to be second in command, and it was trusted that his address and superior intelligence would virtually make him the leader.

The first notice that Washington received of the project was in a letter from Gates, inclosing one to Lafayette, informing the latter of his appointment, and requiring his attendance at Yorktown to receive his instructions.

Gates, in his letter to Washington, asked his opinion and advice, evidently as a matter of form. The latter expressed himself obliged by the "polite request," but observed that, as he neither knew the extent of the objects in view, nor the means to be employed to effect them, it was not in his power to pass any judgment upon the subject. He wished success to the enterprise, "both as it might advance the public good and confer personal

honor on the Marquis de Lafayette, for whom he had a very particular esteem and regard."

The cabal, however, had overshot their mark. Lafayette, who was aware of their intrigues, was so disgusted by the want of deference and respect to the commander-in-chief evinced in the whole proceeding, that he would at once have declined the appointment, had not Washington himself advised him strongly to accept it.

He accordingly proceeded to Yorktown, where Gates already had his little court of schemers and hangers on. Lafayette found him at table, presiding with great hilarity, for he was social in his habits, and in the flush of recent success. The young marquis had a cordial welcome to his board, which in its buoyant conviviality contrasted with the sober decencies of that of the thoughtful commander-in-chief, in his dreary encampment at Valley Forge. Gates, in his excitement, was profuse of promises. Everything was to be made smooth and easy for Lafayette. He was to have at least two thousand five hundred fighting men under him. Stark, the veteran Stark, was ready to coöperate with a body of Green Mountain Boys. "Indeed," cries Gates, chuckling, "General Stark will have burnt the fleet before your arrival!"

It was near the end of the repast. The wine had circulated freely, and toasts had been given according to the custom of the day. The marquis thought it time to show his flag. One toast, he observed, had been omitted, which he would now propose. Glasses were accordingly

filled, and he gave, "The commander-in-chief of the American armies." The toast was received without cheering.

Lafayette was faithful to the flag he had unfurled. In accepting the command, he considered himself detached from the main army and under the immediate orders of the commander-in-chief. He had a favorable opinion of the military talents of Conway, but he was aware of the game he was playing; he made a point, therefore, of having the Baron de Kalb appointed to the expedition, whose commission being of older date than that of Conway, would give him the precedence of that officer, and make him second in command. This was reluctantly ceded by the cabal, who found themselves baffled by the loyalty in friendship of the youthful soldier.

Lafayette set out for Albany without any very sanguine expectations. Writing to Washington from Flemington, amid the difficulties of winter travel, he says: "I go on very slowly, sometimes drenched by rain, sometimes covered with snow, and not entertaining many handsome thoughts about the projected incursion into Canada. Lake Champlain is too cold for producing the least bit of laurel, and, if I am not starved, I shall be as proud as if I had gained three battles."*

* Sparks' *Cor. Am. Rev.*, vol. ii. p. 74.

CHAPTER XXIX.

GATES UNDERTAKES TO EXPLAIN THE CONWAY CORRESPONDENCE.—WASHINGTON'S SEARCHING ANALYSIS OF THE EXPLANATION.—CLOSE OF THE CORRESPONDENCE.—SPURIOUS LETTERS PUBLISHED.—LAFAYETTE AND THE CANADA EXPEDITION.—HIS PERPLEXITIES.—COUNSELS OF WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON'S letter of the 4th of January, on the subject of the Conway correspondence, had not reached General Gates until the 22d of January, after his arrival at Yorktown. No sooner did Gates learn from its context, that all Washington's knowledge of that correspondence was confined to a single paragraph of a letter, and that merely as quoted in conversation by Wilkinson, than the whole matter appeared easily to be explained or shuffled off. He accordingly took pen in hand, and addressed Washington as follows, on the 23d of January: "The letter which I had the honor to receive yesterday from your Excellency, has relieved me from unspeakable uneasiness. I now anticipate the pleasure it will give you when you discover that what has been conveyed to you for an extract of General Conway's letter to me, was not an information which friendly motives induced a man of honor to give,

that injured virtue might be forearmed against secret enemies. The paragraph which your Excellency has condescended to transcribe, is spurious. It was certainly fabricated to answer the most selfish and wicked purposes."

He then goes on to declare that the genuine letter of Conway was perfectly harmless, containing judicious remarks upon the want of discipline in the army, but making no mention of weak generals or bad counselors. "Particular actions rather than persons were blamed, but with impartiality, and I am convinced he did not aim at lessening, in my opinion, the merit of any person. His letter was perfectly harmless; however, now that various reports have been circulated concerning its contents, they ought not to be submitted to the solemn inspection of those who stand most high in the public esteem.

"Anxiety and jealousy would arise in the breast of very respectable officers, who, sensible of faults which inexperience and that alone, may have led them into, would be unnecessarily disgusted, if they perceived a probability of such errors being recorded.

"Honor forbids it, and patriotism demands that I should return the letter into the hands of the writer. I will do it; but, at the same time, I declare that the paragraph conveyed to your Excellency as a genuine part of it, was, in words as well as in substance, a wicked forgery.

"About the beginning of December, I was informed that letter had occasioned an explanation between your

Excellency and that gentleman. Not knowing whether the whole letter or a part of it had been stealingly copied, but fearing malice had altered its original texture, I own, sir, that a dread of the mischiefs which might attend the forgery, I suspected would be made, put me some time in a most painful situation. When I communicated to the officers in my family the intelligence which I had received, they all entreated me to rescue their characters from the suspicions they justly conceived themselves liable to, until the guilty persons should be known. To facilitate the discovery, I wrote to your Excellency; but, unable to learn whether General Conway's letter had been transmitted to you by a member of Congress, or a gentleman in the army, I was afraid much time would be lost in the course of the inquiry, and that the States might receive some capital injury from the infidelity of the person who I thought had stolen a copy of the obnoxious letter. Was it not probable that the secrets of the army might be obtained and betrayed through the same means to the enemy? For this reason, sir, not doubting that Congress would most cheerfully concur with you in tracing out the criminal, I wrote to the president, and inclosed to him a copy of my letter to your Excellency.

"About the time I was forwarding those letters, Brigadier-general Wilkinson returned to Albany. I informed him of the treachery which had been committed, but I concealed from him the measures I was pursuing to un-

mask the author. Wilkinson answered, he was assured it never would come to light; and endeavored to fix my suspicions on Lieutenant-colonel Troup,* who he said, might have incautiously conversed on the substance of General Conway's letter with Colonel Hamilton, whom you had sent not long before to Albany. I did not listen to this insinuation against your aide-de-camp and mine."

In the original draft of this letter, which we have seen among the papers of General Gates, he adds, as a reason for not listening to the insinuation, that he considered it even as ungenerous. "But," pursues he, "the light your Excellency has just assisted me with, exhibiting the many qualifications which are necessarily blended together in the head and heart of General Wilkinson, I would not omit this fact; it will enable your Excellency to judge whether or not he would scruple to make such a forgery as that which he now stands charged with, and ought to be exemplarily punished." This, with considerable more to the same purport, intended to make Wilkinson the scape-goat, stands canceled in the draft, and was omitted in the letter sent to Washington; but by some means, fair or foul, it came to the knowledge of Wilkinson, who has published it at length in his memoirs, and who, it will be found, resented the imputation thus conveyed.

General Conway, also, in a letter to Washington (dated January 27th), informs him that the letter had been re-

* At that time an aide-de-camp of Gates.

turned to him by Gates, and that he found with great satisfaction that "the paragraph so much spoken of did not exist in the said letter, nor anything like it." He had intended, he adds, to publish the letter, but had been dissuaded by President Laurens and two or three members of Congress, to whom he had shown it, lest it should inform the enemy of a misunderstanding among the American generals. He therefore depended upon the justice, candor, and generosity of General Washington, to put a stop to the forgery.

On the 9th of February, Washington wrote Gates a long and searching reply to his letters of the 8th and 23d of January, analyzing them, and showing how, in spirit and import, they contradicted each other; and how sometimes the same letter contradicted itself. How in the first letter, the reality of the extracts was by implication allowed, and the only solicitude shown was to find out the person who brought them to light; while, in the second letter, the whole was pronounced, "in word as well as in substance, a wicked forgery." "It is not my intention," observes Washington, "to contradict this assertion, but only to intimate some considerations which tend to induce a supposition, that, though none of General Conway's letters to you contained the offensive passage mentioned, there might have been something in them too nearly related to it, that could give such an extraordinary alarm. If this were not the case, how easy in the first instance to have declared there was nothing

exceptionable in them, and to have produced the letters themselves in support of it? The propriety of the objections suggested against submitting them to inspection may very well be questioned. 'The various reports circulated concerning their contents,' were perhaps so many arguments for making them speak for themselves, to place the matter upon the footing of certainty. Concealment in an affair which had made so much noise, though not by *my* means, will naturally lead men to conjecture the worst, and it will be a subject of speculation even to candor itself. The anxiety and jealousy you apprehend from revealing the letter, will be very apt to be increased by suppressing it."

We forbear to follow Washington through his stern analysis, but we cannot omit the concluding paragraph of his strictures on the character of Conway.

"Notwithstanding the hopeful presages you are pleased to figure to yourself of General Conway's firm and constant friendship to America, I cannot persuade myself to retract the prediction concerning him, which you so emphatically wish had not been inserted in my last. A better acquaintance with him, than I have reason to think you have had, from what you say, and a concurrence of circumstances, oblige me to give him but little credit for the qualifications of his heart, of which, at least, I beg leave to assume the privilege of being a tolerable judge. Were it necessary, more instances than one might be adduced, from his behavior and conversation, to manifest

that he is capable of all the malignity of detraction, and all the meanness of intrigue, to gratify the absurd resentment of disappointed vanity, or to answer the purposes of personal aggrandizement, and promote the interest of faction."

Gates evidently quailed beneath this letter. In his reply, February 19th, he earnestly hoped that no more of that time, so precious to the public, might be lost upon the subject of General Conway's letter.

"Whether that gentleman," says he, "does or does not deserve the suspicions you express, would be entirely indifferent to me, did he not possess an office of high rank in the army of the United States. As to the gentleman, I have no personal connection with him, nor had I any correspondence previous to his writing the letter which has given offense, nor have I since written to him, save to certify what I know to be the contents of that letter. He, therefore, must be responsible; as I heartily dislike controversy, even upon my own account, and much more in a matter wherein I was only accidentally concerned," etc., etc.

The following was the dignified but freezing note with which Washington closed this correspondence.

"VALLEY FORGE, *24th Feb.* 1778.

"SIR,—I yesterday received your favor of the 19th instant. I am as averse to controversy as any man; and, had I not been forced into it, you never would have had occasion to impute to me even the shadow of a disposi-

tion towards it. Your repeatedly and solemnly disclaiming any offensive views in those matters which have been the subject of our past correspondence, makes me willing to close with the desire you express of burying them hereafter in silence, and, as far as future events will permit, oblivion. My temper leads me to peace and harmony with all men; and it is peculiarly my wish to avoid any personal feuds or dissensions with those who are embarked in the same great national interest with myself, as every difference of this kind must, in its consequences, be very injurious. I am, sir," etc.

Among the various insidious artifices resorted to about this time to injure the character of Washington, and destroy public confidence in his sincerity, was the publication of a series of letters purporting to be from him to some members of his family, and to his agent, Mr. Lund Washington, which, if genuine, would prove him to be hollow-hearted and faithless to the cause he was pretending to uphold. They had appeared in England in a pamphlet form, as if printed from originals and drafts found in possession of a black servant of Washington, who had been left behind ill, at Fort Lee, when it was evacuated. They had recently been reprinted at New York in Rivington's "Royal Gazette;" the first letter making its appearance on the 14th of February. It had also been printed at New York in a handbill, and extracts published in a Philadelphia paper.

Washington took no notice of this publication at the time, but in private correspondence with his friends, he observes: "These letters are written with a great deal of art. The intermixture of so many family circumstances (which, by the by, want foundation in truth) gives an air of plausibility, which renders the villainy greater; as the whole is a contrivance to answer the most diabolical purposes. Who the author of them is, I know not. From information or acquaintance he must have had some knowledge of the component parts of my family; but he has most egregiously mistaken facts in several instances. The design of his labors is as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness."* And in another letter, he observes: "They were written to show that I was an enemy to independence, and with a view to create distrust and jealousy. It is no easy matter to decide whether the villainy or the artifice of these letters is greatest."†

The author of these letters was never discovered. He entirely failed in his object; the letters were known at once to be forgeries.‡

* Letter to Gen. Henry Lee, Virginia.—Sparks' *Writings of Washington*, vol. v. 378.

† Letter to Landon Carter. *Idem.*, p. 391.

‡ The introduction to the letters states them to have been transmitted to England by an officer serving in Delancey's corps of loyalists, who gives the following account of the way he came by them: "Among the prisoners at Fort Lee, I espied a mulatto fellow, whom I thought I recollected, and who confirmed my conjectures by gazing very earnestly at me. I asked him if he knew me. At first, he was unwilling to own it; but when

Letters received at this juncture from Lafayette, gave Washington tidings concerning the expedition against Canada, set on foot without consulting him. General Conway had arrived at Albany three days before the marquis, and his first word when they met was that the expedition was quite impossible. Generals Schuyler, Lincoln, and Arnold, had written to Conway to that effect. The marquis at first was inclined to hope the contrary, but his hope was soon demolished. Instead of the two thousand five hundred men that had been promised him, not twelve hundred in all were to be found fit for duty, and most part of these were "naked even for a summer's

he was about to be carried off, thinking, I suppose, that I might perhaps be of some service to him, he came and told me that he was Billy, and the old servant of General Washington. He had been left there on account of an indisposition which prevented his attending his master. I asked him a great many questions, as you may suppose ; but found very little satisfaction in his answers. At last, however, he told me that he had a small portmanteau of his master's of which, when he found that he must be put into confinement, he entreated my care. It contained only a few stockings and shirts ; and I could see nothing worth my care, except an almanac, in which he had kept a sort of a journal, or diary of his proceedings since his first coming to New York ; there were also two letters from his lady, one from Mr. Custis, and some pretty long ones from a Mr. Lund Washington. And in the same bundle with them, the first draughts, or foul copies of answers to them. I read these with avidity ; and being highly entertained with them, have shown them to several of my friends, who all agree with me, that he is a very different character from what they had supposed him."

In commenting on the above, Washington observed that his mulatto man Billy, had never been one moment in the power of the enemy, and that no part of his baggage nor any of his attendants were captured during the whole course of the war.—*Letter to Timothy Pickering*, Sparks, ix. 149.

campaign;" all shrank from a winter incursion into so cold a country. As to General Stark and his legion of Green Mountain Boys, who, according to the gasconade of Gates, might have burnt the fleet before Lafayette's arrival, the marquis received at Albany a letter from the veteran, "who wishes to know," says he, "*what number of men, for what time, and for what rendezvous, I desire him to raise.*"

Another officer, who was to have enlisted men, would have done so, *had he received money*. "One asks what encouragement his people will have; the other has no clothes; not one of them has received a dollar of what was due to them. I have applied to everybody, I have begged at every door I could, these two days, and I see that I could do something were the expedition to be begun in five weeks. But you know we have not an hour to lose; and, indeed, it is now rather too late had we everything in readiness."

The poor marquis was in despair; but what most distressed him was the dread of ridicule. He had written to his friends that he had the command of the expedition; it would be known throughout Europe. "I am afraid," says he, "that it will reflect on my reputation, and I shall be laughed at. My fears upon that subject are so strong, that I would choose to become again only a volunteer, unless Congress offers the means of mending this ugly business by some glorious operation."

A subsequent letter is in the same vein. The poor

marquis, in his perplexity, lays his whole heart open to Washington with childlike simplicity. "I have written lately to you my distressing, ridiculous, foolish, and indeed nameless situation. I am sent, with a great noise, at the head of an army for doing great things; the whole continent, France and Europe herself, and, what is worse, the British army, are in great expectations. How far they will be deceived, how far we shall be ridiculed, you may judge by the candid account you have got of the state of our affairs.—I confess, my dear general, that I find myself of very quick feelings whenever my reputation and glory are concerned in anything. It is very hard that such a part of my happiness, without which I cannot live, should depend upon schemes which I never knew of but when there was no time to put them in execution. I assure you, my most dear and respected friend, that I am more unhappy than I ever was. . . . . I should be very happy if you were here, to give me some advice; but I have nobody to consult with."

Washington, with his considerate, paternal counsels, hastened to calm the perturbation of his youthful friend, and dispel those fears respecting his reputation, excited only, as he observed, "by an uncommon degree of sensibility." "It will be no disadvantage to you to have it known in Europe," writes he, "that you have received so manifest a proof of the good opinion and confidence of Congress as an important detached command. . . . . However sensibly your ardor for glory may make you feel

this disappointment, you may be assured that your character stands as fair as ever it did, and that no new enterprise is necessary to wipe off this imaginary stain."

The project of an irruption into Canada was at length formally suspended by a resolve of Congress; and Washington was directed to recall the marquis and the Baron de Kalb, the presence of the latter being deemed absolutely necessary to the army at Valley Forge. Lafayette at the same time received assurance of the high sense entertained by Congress of his prudence, activity, and zeal, and that nothing was wanting on his part to give the expedition the utmost possible effect.

Gladly the young marquis hastened back to Valley Forge, to enjoy the companionship and find himself once more under the paternal eye of Washington, leaving Conway for the time in command at Albany, "where there would be nothing, perhaps, to be attended to but some disputes of Indians and tories."

Washington, in a letter to General Armstrong, writes, "I shall say no more of the Canada expedition than that it is at an end. I never was made acquainted with a single circumstance relating to it." *

* Sparks' *Writings of Washington*, vol. v. p. 300.

CHAPTER XXX.

MORE TROUBLE ABOUT THE CONWAY LETTER. — CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LORD STIRLING AND WILKINSON. — WILKINSON'S HONOR WOUNDED. — HIS PASSAGE AT ARMS WITH GENERAL GATES. — HIS SEAT AT THE BOARD OF WAR UNCOMFORTABLE. — DETERMINES THAT LORD STIRLING SHALL BLEED. — HIS WOUNDED HONOR HEALED. — HIS INTERVIEW WITH WASHINGTON. — SEES THE CORRESPONDENCE OF GATES. — DENOUNCES GATES AND GIVES UP THE SECRETARYSHIP. — IS THROWN OUT OF EMPLOY. — CLOSING REMARKS ON THE CONWAY CABAL.

THE Conway letter was destined to be a further source of trouble to the cabal. Lord Stirling, in whose presence, at Reading, Wilkinson had cited the letter, and who had sent information of it to Washington, was now told that Wilkinson, on being questioned by General Conway, had declared that no such words as those reported, nor any to the same effect, were in the letter.

His lordship immediately wrote to Wilkinson, reminding him of the conversation at Reading, and telling him of what he had recently heard.

"I well know," writes his lordship, "that it is impossible you could have made any such declaration; but it will give great satisfaction to many of your friends to

know whether Conway made such inquiry, and what was your answer; they would also be glad to know what were the words of the letter, and I should be very much obliged to you for a copy of it."

Wilkinson found that his tongue had again brought him into difficulty; but he trusted to his rhetoric, rather than his logic, to get him out of it. He wrote in reply, that he perfectly remembered spending a social day with his lordship at Reading, in which the conversation became general, unreserved, and copious; though the tenor of his lordship's discourse, and the nature of their situation, made it confidential. "I cannot, therefore," adds he, logically, "recapitulate particulars, or charge my memory with the circumstances you mention; but, my lord, I disdain low craft, subtlety, and evasion, and will acknowledge it is possible, in the warmth of social intercourse, when the mind is relaxed and the heart is unguarded, that observations may have elapsed which have not since occurred to me. On my late arrival in camp, Brigadier-general Conway informed me that he had been charged by General Washington with writing a letter to Major-general Gates, which reflected on the general and the army. The particulars of this charge, which Brigadier-general Conway then repeated, I cannot now recollect. I had read the letter alluded to; I did not consider the information conveyed in his Excellency's letter, as expressed by Brigadier-general Conway, to be literal, and well remember replying to that effect in dubious terms.

I had no inducement to stain my veracity, were I ever so prone to that infamous vice, as Brigadier Conway informed me he had justified the charge.

"I can scarce credit my senses, when I read the paragraph in which you request an extract from a private letter, which had fallen under my observation. *I have been indiscreet, my lord, but be assured I will not be dishonorable.*"

This communication of Lord Stirling, Wilkinson gives as the first intimation he had received of his being implicated in the disclosure of Conway's letter. When he was subsequently on his way to Yorktown to enter upon his duties as secretary of the Board of War, he learnt at Lancaster that General Gates had denounced him as the betrayer of that letter, and had spoken of him in the grossest language.

"I was shocked by this information," writes he; "I had sacrificed my lineal rank at General Gates' request; I had served him with zeal and fidelity, of which he possessed the strongest evidence; yet he had condemned me unheard for an act of which I was perfectly innocent, and against which every feeling of my soul revolted with horror. . . . . I worshipped honor as the jewel of my soul, and did not pause for the course to be pursued; but I owed it to disparity of years and rank, to former connection and the affections of my own breast, to drain the cup of conciliation and seek an explanation."

The result of these, and other misfortunes, expressed

with that grandiloquence on which Wilkinson evidently prided himself, was a letter to Gates, reminding him of the zeal and devotion with which he had uniformly asserted and maintained his cause; "but, sir," adds he, "in spite of every consideration, you have wounded my honor, and must make acknowledgment or satisfaction for the injury."

"In consideration of our past connection, I descend to that explanation with you which I should have denied any other man. The inclosed letters unmask the villain and evince my innocence. My lord shall bleed for his conduct, but it is proper I first see you."

The letters inclosed were those between him and Lord Stirling, the exposition of which he alleges ought to acquit him of sinister intention, and stamp the report of his lordship to General Washington with palpable falsehood.

Gates writes briefly in reply. "Sir,—The following extract of a letter from General Washington to me will show you how your honor has been called in question; which is all the explanation necessary upon this matter; any other satisfaction you may command."

Then followed the extracts giving the information communicated by Wilkinson to Major McWilliams, Lord Stirling's aide-de-camp.

"After reading the whole of the above extract," adds Gates, "I am astonished, if you really gave Major McWilliams such information, how you could intimate to me that it was *possible* Colonel Troup *had conversed* with

Colonel Hamilton upon the subject of General Conway's letter."

According to Wilkinson's story he now proceeded to Yorktown, purposely arriving in the twilight, to escape observation. There he met with an old comrade, Captain Stoddart, recounted his wrongs, and requested him to be the bearer of a message to General Gates. Stoddart refused; and warned him that he was running headlong to destruction: "but ruin," observes Wilkinson, "had no terrors for an ardent young man, who prized his honor a thousand fold more than his life, and who was willing to hazard his eternal happiness in its defense."

He accidentally met with another military friend, Lieutenant-colonel Ball, of the Virginia line, "whose spirit was as independent as his fortune." He willingly became bearer of the following note from Wilkinson to General Gates:—

"Sir,—I have discharged my duty to you, and to my conscience; meet me to-morrow morning behind the English church, and I will there stipulate the satisfaction which you have promised to grant," etc.

Colonel Ball was received with complaisance by the general. The meeting was fixed for eight o'clock in the morning, with pistols.

At the appointed time Wilkinson and his second, having put their arms in order, were about to sally forth, when Captain Stoddart made his appearance, and informed Wilkinson that Gates desired to speak with him.

Where?—In the street near the door.—"The surprise robbed me of circumspection," continues Wilkinson. "I requested Colonel Ball to halt, and followed Captain Stoddart. I found General Gates unarmed and alone, and was received with tenderness but manifest embarrassment: he asked me to walk, turned into a back street, and we proceeded in silence till we passed the buildings, when he burst into tears, took me by the hand, and asked me 'how I could think he wished to injure me?' I was too deeply affected to speak, and he relieved my embarrassment by continuing: '*I* injure you! it is impossible. I should as soon think of injuring my own child.' This language," observes Wilkinson, "not only disarmed me, but awakened all my confidence and all my tenderness. I was silent; and he added, 'Besides, there was no cause for injuring you, as Conway acknowledged his letter, and has since said much harder things to Washington's face.'

"Such language left me nothing to require," continues Wilkinson. "It was satisfactory beyond expectation, and rendered me more than content. I was flattered and pleased; and if a third person had doubted the sincerity of the explanation, I would have insulted him."

A change soon came over the spirit of this maudlin scene. Wilkinson attended as secretary at the War Office. "My reception from the president, General Gates," writes he, "did not correspond with his recent professions; he was civil, but barely so, and I was at a

loss to account for his coldness, yet had no suspicion of his insincerity."

Wilkinson soon found his situation at the Board of War uncomfortable ; and after the lapse of a few days set out for Valley Forge. On his way thither he met Washington's old friend, Dr. Craik, and learnt from him that his promotion to the rank of brigadier-general by brevet, had been remonstrated against to Congress by forty-seven colonels. He therefore sent in his resignation, not wishing, he said, to hold it, unless he could wear it to the honor and advantage of his country ; "and this conduct," adds he, "however repugnant to fashionable ambition, I find consistent with those principles in which I early drew my sword in the present contest."

At Lancaster, Wilkinson, recollecting his resolve that Lord Stirling "should bleed for his conduct," requested his friend, Colonel Moylan, to deliver a "peremptory message" to his lordship. The colonel considered the measure rather precipitate, and suggested that a suitable acknowledgment from his lordship would be a more satisfactory reparation of the wrong than a sacrifice of the life of either of the parties. "There is not in the whole range of my friends, acquaintance, and I might add, in the universe," exclaims Wilkinson, "a man of more sublimated sentiment, or who combined with sound discretion a more punctilious sense of honor, than Colonel Moylan." Taking the colonel's advice, therefore, he moderated his peremptory message to the following note:

"My Lord,—The propriety or impropriety of your communicating to his Excellency any circumstance which passed at your lordship's board at Reading, I leave to be determined by your own feelings and the judgment of the public; but as the affair has eventually induced reflections on my integrity, the sacred duty I owe my honor obliges me to request from your lordship's hand, that the conversation which you have published *passed in a private company during a convivial hour.*"

His lordship accordingly gave it under his hand that the words passed under such circumstances, but under no injunction of secrecy. Whereupon Wilkinson's irritable but easily pacified honor was appeased, and his sword slept in its sheath.

At Valley Forge Wilkinson had an interview with Washington, in which the subject of General Conway's letter was discussed, and the whole correspondence between Gates and the commander-in-chief laid before him.

"This exposition," writes Wilkinson, "unfolded to me a scene of perfidy and duplicity of which I had no suspicion." It drew from him the following letter to Washington, dated March 28th: "I beg you to receive the grateful homage of a sensible mind for your condescension in exposing to me General Gates' letters, which unmask his artifices and efforts to ruin me. The authenticity of the information received through Lord Stirling I cannot confirm, as I solemnly assure your Excellency I do not remember the conversation which passed on that

occasion, nor can I recollect particular passages of that letter, as I had but a cursory view of it at a late hour. However, I so well remember its general tenor, that, although General Gates has pledged his word it was a wicked and malicious forgery, I will stake my reputation, if the genuine letter is produced, that words to the same effect will appear."

A few days afterwards, Wilkinson addressed the following letter to the President of Congress :—

"SIR,—While I make my acknowledgments to Congress, for the appointment of Secretary to the Board of War and Ordnance, I am sorry I should be constrained to resign that office ; but, after the acts of *treachery* and *falsehood* in which I have detected Major-general Gates, the president of that board, it is impossible for me to reconcile it to my honor to serve with him." *

After recording this letter in his memoirs, Wilkinson adds: "I had previously resigned my brevet of brigadier-general, on grounds of patriotism ; but I still retained my commission of colonel, which was never to my knowledge revoked ; yet the dominant influence of General Gates, and the feuds, and factions, and intrigues which prevailed in Congress and in the army of that day, threw me out of employ."—There we shall leave him ; it

* Wilkinson's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 409.

was a kind of retirement which we apprehend he had richly merited, and we doubt whether his country would have been the loser had he been left to enjoy it for the remainder of his days.

Throughout all the intrigues and manœuvres of the cabal, a part of which we have laid before the reader, Washington had conducted himself with calmness and self-command, speaking on the subject to no one but a very few of his friends; lest a knowledge of those internal dissensions should injure the service.

In a letter to Patrick Henry he gives his closing observations concerning them. "I cannot precisely mark the extent of their views; but it appeared in general, that General Gates was to be exalted on the ruin of my reputation and influence. This I am authorized to say, from undeniable facts in my own possession, from publications, the evident scope of which could not be mistaken, and from private detractions industriously circulated. General Mifflin, it is commonly supposed, bore the second part in the cabal; and General Conway, I know, was a very active and malignant partisan; but I have good reason to believe that their machinations have recoiled most sensibly upon themselves."

An able and truthful historian, to whose researches we are indebted for most of the documents concerning the cabal, gives it as his opinion that there is not sufficient evidence to prove any concerted plan of action or any fixed design among the leaders: a few aspiring men

like Gates and Mifflin, might have flattered themselves with indefinite hopes, and looked forward to a change as promising the best means of aiding their ambitious views; but that it was not probable they had united in any clear or fixed purpose.*

These observations are made with that author's usual candor and judgment; yet, wanting as the intrigues of the cabal might be in plan or fixed design, they were fraught with mischief to the public service, inspiring doubts of its commanders and seeking to provoke them to desperate enterprises. They harassed Washington in the latter part of his campaign, contributed to the dark cloud that hung over his gloomy encampment at Valley Forge, and might have effected his downfall, had he been more irascible in his temper, more at the mercy of impulse, and less firmly fixed in the affections of the people. As it was, they only tended to show wherein lay his surest strength. Jealous rivals he might have in the army, bitter enemies in Congress, but the soldiers loved him, and the large heart of the nation always beat true to him.

NOTE.

The following anecdote of the late Governor Jay, one of our purest and most illustrious statesmen, is furnished to us by his son Judge Jay :—

"Shortly before the death of John Adams, I was sitting alone with my father, conversing about the American Revolution. Suddenly he remarked, 'Ah, William! the history of that Revolution will never be known.

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* Sparks' *Writings of Washington*, vol. v. Appendix—where there is a series of documents respecting the Conway Cabal.

Nobody now alive knows it but John Adams and myself.' Surprised at such a declaration, I asked him to what he referred? He briefly replied, 'The proceedings of the old Congress.' Again I inquired, 'What proceedings?' He answered, 'Those against Washington; from first to last there was a most bitter party against him.'"

As the old Congress always sat with closed doors, the public knew no more of what passed within than what it was deemed expedient to disclose.

CHAPTER XXXI.

COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENT.—REFORMS IN THE ARMY.—SCARCITY IN THE CAMP.—THE ENEMY REVEL IN PHILADELPHIA.—ATTEMPT TO SURPRISE LIGHT-HORSE HARRY.—HIS GALLANT DEFENSE.—PRAISED BY WASHINGTON.—PROMOTED.—LETTER FROM GENERAL LEE.—BURGOYNE RETURNS TO ENGLAND.—MRS. WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE.—BRYAN FAIRFAX VISITS THE CAMP.—ARRIVAL OF THE BARON STEUBEN.—HIS CHARACTER.—DISCIPLINES THE ARMY.—GREENE MADE QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

DURING the winter's encampment in Valley Forge, Washington sedulously applied himself to the formation of a new system for the army. At his earnest solicitation Congress appointed a committee of five, called the Committee of Arrangement, to repair to the camp and assist him in the task.* Before their arrival he had collected the written opinions and suggestions of his officers on the subject, and from these, and his own observations and experience, had prepared a document exhibiting the actual state of the army, the defects of previous systems, and the alterations and reforms that were necessary. The committee remained three months with him in camp, and then made a report

* Names of the committee—General Reed, Nathaniel Folsom, Francis Dana, Charles Carroll, and Gouverneur Morris.

to Congress founded on his statement. The reforms therein recommended were generally adopted. On one point, however, there was much debate. Washington had urged that the pay of the officers was insufficient for their decent subsistence, especially during the actual depreciation of the currency; and that many resignations were the consequence. He recommended not only that their pay should be increased, but that there should be a provision for their future support, by half pay and a pensionary establishment, so as to secure them from being absolutely impoverished in the service of their country.

This last recommendation had to encounter a great jealousy of the army on the part of Congress, and all that Washington could effect by strenuous and unremitted exertions, was a kind of compromise, according to which officers were to receive half-pay for seven years after the war, and non-commissioned officers and privates eighty dollars each.

The reforms adopted were slow in going into operation. In the meantime, the distresses of the army continued to increase. The surrounding country for a great distance was exhausted, and had the appearance of having been pillaged. In some places where the inhabitants had provisions and cattle they denied it, intending to take them to Philadelphia, where they could obtain greater prices. The undisturbed communication with the city had corrupted the minds of the people in its vicinage. "This State is sick even unto the death," said Gouverneur Morris.

The parties sent out to forage too often returned empty-handed. "For some days past there has been little less than a famine in the camp," writes Washington, on one occasion. "A part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been, ere this, excited by their suffering to a general mutiny and desertion."

The committee, in their report, declared that the want of straw had cost the lives of many of the troops. "Unprovided with this, or materials to raise them from the cold and wet earth, sickness and mortality have spread through their quarters in an astonishing degree. Nothing can equal their sufferings, except the patience and fortitude with which the faithful part of the army endure them." A British historian cites as a proof of the great ascendency of Washington over his "raw and undisciplined troops," that so many remained with him throughout the winter, in this wretched situation and still more wretched plight; almost naked, often on short allowance, with great sickness and mortality, and a scarcity of medicines, their horses perishing by hundreds from hunger and the severity of the season.

He gives a striking picture of the indolence and luxury which reigned at the same time in the British army in Philadelphia. It is true, the investment of the city by the Americans rendered provisions dear and fuel scanty;

but the consequent privations were felt by the inhabitants, not by their invaders. The latter reveled as if in a conquered place. Private houses were occupied without rendering compensation; the officers were quartered on the principal inhabitants, many of whom were of the Society of "Friends;" some even transgressed so far against propriety as to introduce their mistresses into the quarters thus oppressively obtained. The quiet habits of the city were outraged by the dissolute habits of a camp. Gaming prevailed to a shameless degree. A foreign officer kept a faro bank, at which he made a fortune, and some of the young officers ruined themselves.

"During the whole of this long winter of riot and dissipation," continues the same writer, "Washington was suffered to remain undisturbed at Valley Forge, with an army not exceeding five thousand effective men, and his cannon frozen up and immovable. A nocturnal attack might have forced him to a disadvantageous action or compelled him to a disastrous retreat, leaving behind him his sick, cannon, ammunition, and heavy baggage. It might have opened the way for supplies to the city, and shaken off the lethargy of the British army. In a word," adds he, "had General Howe led on his troops to action, victory was in his power and conquest in his train." *

Without assenting to the probability of such a result,

* Stedman.

it is certain that the army for a part of the winter, while it held Philadelphia in siege, was in as perilous a situation as that which kept a bold front before Boston, without ammunition to serve its cannon.

On one occasion there was a flurry at the most advanced post, where Captain Henry Lee (Light-horse Harry) with a few of his troops was stationed. He made himself formidable to the enemy by harassing their foraging parties. An attempt was made to surprise him. A party of about two hundred dragoons, taking a circuitous route in the night, came upon him by day-break. He had but a few men with him at the time, and took post in a large store-house. His scanty force did not allow a soldier for each window. The dragoons attempted to force their way into the house. There was a warm contest. The dragoons were bravely repulsed, and sheered off, leaving two killed and four wounded. "So well directed was the opposition," writes Lee to Washington, "that we drove them from the stables, and saved every horse. We have got the arms, some cloaks, etc., of their wounded. The enterprise was certainly daring, though the issue of it very ignominious. I had not a soldier for each window."

Washington, whose heart evidently warmed more and more to this young Virginian officer, the son of his "low-land beauty," not content with noticing his exploit in general orders, wrote a note to him on the subject, expressed with unusual familiarity and warmth. "My dear

Lee," writes he, "although I have given you my thanks in the general orders of this day, for the late instance of your gallant behavior, I cannot resist the inclination I feel to repeat them again in this manner. I needed no fresh proof of your merit to bear you in remembrance. I waited only for the proper time and season to show it; those I hope are not far off. . . . . Offer my sincere thanks to the whole of your gallant party, and assure them, that no one felt pleasure more sensibly, or rejoiced more sincerely for your and their escape, than your affectionate," etc.

In effect, Washington not long afterwards strongly recommended Lee for the command of two troops of horse, with the rank of major, to act as an independent partisan corps. "His genius," observes he, "particularly adapts him to a command of this nature; and it will be the most agreeable to him of any station in which he could be placed."

It was a high gratification to Washington when Congress made this appointment; accompanying it with encomiums on Lee as a brave and prudent officer, who had rendered essential service to the country, and acquired distinguished honor to himself and the corps he commanded.

About the time that Washington was gladdened by the gallantry and good fortune of "Light-horse Harry," he received a letter from another Lee, the captive general, still in the hands of the enemy. It had been written

nearly a month previously. "I have the strongest reason to flatter myself," writes Lee, "that you will interest yourself in whatever interests my comfort and welfare. I think it my duty to inform you that my situation is much bettered. It is now five days that I am on my parole. I have the full liberty of the city and its limits; have horses at my command furnished by Sir Henry Clinton and General Robertson; am lodged with two of the oldest and warmest friends I have in the world, Colonel Butler and Colonel Disney of the forty-second regiment. In short, my situation is rendered as easy, comfortable and pleasant as possible, for a man who is in any sort a prisoner."

Washington in reply expressed his satisfaction at learning that he was released from confinement, and permitted so many indulgences. "You may rest assured," adds he, "that I feel myself very much interested in your welfare, and that every exertion has been used on my part to effect your exchange. This I have not been able to accomplish. However, from the letters which have lately passed between Sir William Howe and myself, upon the subject of prisoners, I am authorized to expect that you will return in a few days to your friends on parole, as Major-general Prescott will be sent in on the same terms for that purpose."

Difficulties, however, still occurred; and General Lee and Colonel Ethan Allen were doomed for a few months longer to suffer the annoyance of hope deferred.

The embarkation of General Burgoyne and his troops from Boston, became also a subject of difficulty and delay; it being alleged that some stipulations of the treaty of surrender had not been complied with. After some correspondence, and discussion, it was resolved in Congress that the embarkation should be suspended, until a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention should be properly notified to that body by the court of Great Britain. Burgoyne subsequently obtained permission for his own return to England on parole, on account of ill health.

In the month of February, Mrs. Washington rejoined the general at Valley Forge, and took up her residence at head-quarters. The arrangements consequent to her arrival bespeak the simplicity of style in this rude encampment. "The general's apartment is very small," writes she to a friend; "he has had a log cabin built to dine in, which has made our quarters much more tolerable than they were at first."

Lady Stirling, Mrs. Knox, the wife of the general, and the wives of other of the officers were also in the camp. The reforms in the commissariat had begun to operate. Provisions arrived in considerable quantities; supplies, on their way to the Philadelphia market to load the British tables, were intercepted and diverted into the hungry camp of the patriots; magazines were formed in Valley Forge; the threatened famine was averted; "grim-visaged war" gradually relaxed his features, and affairs

in the encampment began to assume a more cheering aspect.

In the latter part of the winter, Washington was agreeably surprised by a visit from his old and highly esteemed friend, Bryan Fairfax. That gentleman, although he disapproved of the measures of the British government which had severed the colonies from the mother country, was still firm in allegiance to his king. This had rendered his situation uncomfortable among his former intimates, who were generally embarked in the Revolution. He had resolved, therefore, to go to England, and remain there until the peace. Washington, who knew his integrity and respected his conscientiousness, received him with the warm cordiality of former and happier days; for indeed he brought with him recollections always dear to his heart, of Mount Vernon, and Belvoir, and Virginia life, and the pleasant banks of the Potomac. As Mr. Fairfax intended to embark at New York, Washington furnished him with a passport to that city. Being arrived there, the conscience of Mr. Fairfax prevented him from taking the oaths prescribed, which he feared might sever him from his wife and children, and he obtained permission from the British commander to return to them. On his way home he revisited Washington, and the kindness he again experienced from him, so different from the harshness with which others had treated him, drew from him a grateful letter of acknowledgment after he had arrived in Virginia.

"There are times," said he, "when favors conferred make a greater impression than at others, for, though I have received many, I hope I have not been unmindful of them; yet, that at a time your popularity was at the highest and mine at the lowest, and when it is so common for men's resentments to run high against those who differ from them in opinion, you should act with your wonted kindness towards me, has affected me more than any favor I have received; and could not be believed by some in New York, it being above the run of common minds." *

Washington, in reply, expressed himself gratified by the sentiments of his letter and confident of their sincerity. "The friendship," added he, "which I ever professed and felt for you, met with no diminution from the difference in our political sentiments. I know the rectitude of my own intentions, and believing in the sincerity of yours, lamented, though I did not condemn, your renunciation of the creed I had adopted. Nor do I think any person or power ought to do it, whilst your conduct is not opposed to the general interest of the people and the measures they are pursuing; the latter, that is our actions, depending upon ourselves, may be controlled;

*Bryan Fairfax continued to reside in Virginia until his death, which happened in 1802, at seventy-five years of age. He became proprietor of Belvoir and heir to the family title, but the latter he never assumed. During the latter years of his life he was a clergyman of the Episcopal church.

while the powers of thinking, originating in higher causes, cannot always be moulded to our wishes."

The most important arrival in the camp was that of the Baron Steuben, towards the latter part of February. He was a seasoned soldier from the old battle-fields of Europe; having served in the seven years' war, been aide-de-camp to the great Frederick, and connected with the quartermaster-general's department. Honors had been heaped upon him in Germany. After leaving the Prussian army he had been grand marshal of the court of the Prince of Hohenzollern-Hechingen, colonel in the circle of Suabia, lieutenant-general under the Prince Margrave of Baden, and knight of the Order of Fidelity; and he had declined liberal offers from the King of Sardinia and the Emperor of Austria. With an income of about three thousand dollars, chiefly arising from various appointments, he was living pleasantly in distinguished society at the German courts, and making occasional visits to Paris, when he was persuaded by the Count de St. Germain, French Minister of War, and others of the French cabinet, to come out to America, and engage in the cause they were preparing to befriend. Their object was to secure for the American armies the services of an officer of experience and a thorough disciplinarian. Through their persuasions he resigned his several offices, and came out at forty-eight years of age, a soldier of fortune, to the rude fighting grounds of America, to aid a half-disciplined people in their struggle for liberty. No

certainty of remuneration was held out to him, but there was an opportunity for acquiring military glory; the probability of adequate reward should the young republic be successful; and it was hinted that, at all events, the French court would not suffer him to be a loser. As his means, on resigning his offices, were small, Beaumarchais furnished funds for his immediate expenses.

The baron had brought strong letters from Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane, our envoys at Paris, and from the Count St. Germain. Landing at Portsmouth in New Hampshire, December 1st, he had forwarded copies of his letters to Washington. "The object of my greatest ambition," writes he, "is to render your country all the service in my power, and to deserve the title of a citizen of America by fighting for the cause of your liberty. If the distinguished ranks in which I have served in Europe should be an obstacle, I had rather serve under your Excellency as a volunteer, than to be an object of discontent among such deserving officers as have already distinguished themselves among you."

"I would say, moreover," adds he, "were it not for the fear of offending your modesty, that your Excellency is the only person under whom, after having served under the king of Prussia, I could wish to pursue an art to which I have wholly given myself up."

By Washington's direction, the baron had proceeded direct to Congress. His letters procured him a distinguished reception from the president. A committee was

appointed to confer with him. He offered his services as a volunteer : making no condition for rank or pay, but trusting, should he prove himself worthy and the cause be crowned with success, he would be indemnified for the sacrifices he had made, and receive such further compensation as he might be thought to merit.

The committee having made their report, the baron's proffered services were accepted with a vote of thanks for his disinterestedness, and he was ordered to join the army at Valley Forge. That army in its ragged condition and squalid quarters, presented a sorry aspect to a strict disciplinarian from Germany, accustomed to the order and appointments of European camps; and the baron often declared, that under such circumstances no army in Europe could be kept together for a single month. The liberal mind of Steuben, however, made every allowance; and Washington soon found in him a consummate soldier, free from pedantry or pretension.

The evils arising from a want of uniformity in discipline and manœuvres throughout the army, had long caused Washington to desire a well-organized inspectorship. He knew that the same desire was felt by Congress. Conway had been appointed to that office, but had never entered upon its duties. The baron appeared to be peculiarly well qualified for such a department; Washington determined, therefore, to set on foot a temporary institution of the kind. Accordingly he proposed to the baron to undertake the office of inspector-general

The latter cheerfully agreed. Two ranks of inspectors were appointed under him; the lowest to inspect brigades, the highest to superintend several of these. Among the inspectors was a French gentleman of the name of Ternant, chosen not only for his intrinsic merit and abilities, but on account of his being well versed in the English as well as the French language, which made him a necessary assistant to the baron, who, at times, needed an interpreter. The gallant Fleury, to whom Congress had given the rank and pay of lieutenant-colonel, and who had exercised the office of aide-major in France, was soon after employed likewise as an inspector.*

In a little while the whole army was under drill; for a great part, made up of raw militia, scarcely knew the manual exercise. Many of the officers, too, knew little of manœuvring, and the best of them had much to learn. The baron furnished his sub-inspectors with written instructions relative to their several functions. He took a company of soldiers under his immediate training, and after he had sufficiently schooled it, made it a model for the others, exhibiting the manœuvres they had to practice.

It was a severe task at first for the aide-de-camp of the great Frederick to operate upon such raw materials. His ignorance of the language, too, increased the difficulty, where manœuvres were to be explained or rectified. He was in despair, until an officer of a New York regiment,

* Washington to the President of Cong. Sparks, v. 347

Captain Walker, who spoke French, stepped forward and offered to act as interpreter. "Had I seen an angel from Heaven," says the baron, "I could not have been more rejoiced." He made Walker his aide-de-camp, and from that time had him always at hand.

For a time, there was nothing but drills throughout the camp, then gradually came evolutions of every kind. The officers were schooled as well as the men. The troops, says a person who was present in the camp, were paraded in a single line with shouldered arms ; every officer in his place. The baron passed in front, then took the musket of each soldier in hand, to see whether it was clean and well polished, and examined whether the men's accoutrements were in good order.

He was sadly worried for a time with the militia ; especially when any manœuvre was to be performed. The men blundered in their exercise; the baron blundered in his English; his French and German were of no avail; he lost his temper, which was rather warm ; swore in all three languages at once, which made the matter worse, and at length called his aide to his assistance ; to help him curse the blockheads, as it was pretended—but no doubt to explain the manœuvre.*

Still the grand marshal of the court of Hohenzollern

* On one occasion having exhausted all his German and French oaths, he vociferated to his aide-de-camp, Major Walker, "Vien mon ami Walker—vien mon bon ami. Sacra— G— dam de gaucherie of dese badauts—je ne puis plus—I can curse dem no more."—*Carden, Anecdotes of the Am. War,* p. 341.

mingled with the veteran soldier of Frederick, and tempered his occasional bursts of impatience; and he had a kind, generous heart, that soon made him a favorite with the men. His discipline extended to their comforts. He inquired into their treatment by the officers. He examined the doctor's reports; visited the sick; and saw that they were well lodged and attended.

He was an example, too, of the regularity and system he exacted. One of the most alert and indefatigable men in the camp; up at daybreak if not before, whenever there were to be any important manœuvres, he took his cup of coffee and smoked his pipe while his servant dressed his hair, and by sunrise he was in the saddle, equipped at all points, with the star of his order of knighthood glittering on his breast, and was off to the parade, alone, if his suite were not ready to attend him.

The strong good sense of the baron was evinced in the manner in which he adapted his tactics to the nature of the army and the situation of the country, instead of adhering with bigotry to the systems of Europe. His instructions were appreciated by all. The officers received them gladly and conformed to them. The men soon became active and adroit. The army gradually acquired a proper organization, and began to operate like a great machine; and Washington found in the baron an intelligent, disinterested, truthful coadjutor, well worthy of the badge he wore as a knight of the Order of *Fidelity*.

Another great satisfaction to Washington, was the ap-

pointment by Congress (March 3d) of Greene to the office of quartermaster-general; still retaining his rank of major-general in the army. The confusion and derangement of this department during the late campaign, while filled by General Mifflin, had been a source of perpetual embarrassment. That officer, however capable of doing his duty, was hardly ever at hand. The line and the staff were consequently at variance; and the country was plundered in a way sufficient to breed a civil war between the staff and the inhabitants. Washington was often obliged to do the duties of the office himself, until he declared to the Committee of Congress that "he would stand quartermaster no longer." * Greene undertook the office with reluctance, and agreed to perform the military duties of it without compensation for the space of a year. He found it in great disorder and confusion, but, by extraordinary exertions and excellent system, so arranged it, as to put the army in a condition to take the field and move with rapidity the moment it should be required.† The favor in which Greene stood with the commander-in-chief, was a continual cause of mean jealousy and cavil among the intriguing and the envious; but it arose from the abundant proofs Washington had received in times of trial and difficulty, that he had a brave, affectionate heart, a sound head, and an efficient arm, on all of which he could thoroughly rely.

* *Correspondence of the Revolution*, vol. ii. p. 274.

† Washington to Greene.—*Writings of Washington*, vol. vii. p. 152.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FORTIFICATIONS OF THE HUDSON.—PROJECT TO SURPRISE SIR HENRY CLINTON.—GENERAL HOWE FORAGES THE JERSEYS.—SHIPS AND STORES BURNT AT BORDENTOWN.—PLANS FOR THE NEXT CAMPAIGN.—GATES AND MIFFLIN UNDER WASHINGTON'S COMMAND.—DOWNFALL OF CONWAY.—LORD NORTH'S CONCILIATORY BILLS.—SENT TO WASHINGTON BY GOVERNOR TRYON.—RESOLVES OF CONGRESS.—LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO TRYON.—REJOICING AT VALLEY FORGE.—THE MISCHIANZA.

THE Highlands of the Hudson had been carefully reconnoitered in the course of the winter by General Putnam, Governor Clinton, his brother James, and several others, and subsequently by a committee from the New York Legislature, to determine upon the most eligible place to be fortified. West Point was ultimately chosen; and Putnam was urged by Washington to have the works finished as soon as possible. The general being called to Connecticut by his private affairs, and being involved in an inquiry to be made into the loss of Forts Montgomery and Clinton, Major-general McDougall was ordered to the Highlands, to take command of the different posts in that department, and to press forward the construction of the works, in which he was to be assisted by Kosciuszko as engineer.

Before General McDougall's arrival, Brigadier-general Parsons had command at West Point. A letter of Washington to the latter suggests an enterprise of a somewhat romantic character. It was no less than to pounce upon Sir Henry Clinton, and carry him off prisoner from his head-quarters in the city of New York. The general was quartered in the Kennedy house near the battery, but a short distance from the Hudson. His situation was rather lonely; most of the houses in that quarter having been consumed in the great fire. A retired way led from it through a back yard or garden to the river bank, where Greenwich street extends at present. The idea of Washington was, that an enterprising party should embark in eight or ten whale-boats at King's Ferry, just below the Highlands, on the first of the ebb, and early in the evening. In six or eight hours, with change of hands, the boats might be rowed under the shadows of the western shore, and approach New York with muffled oars. There were no ships of war at that time on that side of the city; all were in the East River. The officers and men to be employed in the enterprise were to be dressed in red, and much in the style of the British soldiery. Having captured Sir Henry, they might return in their swift whale-boats with the flood tide, or a party of horse might meet them at Fort Lee. "What guards may be at or near his quarters, I cannot say with precision," writes Washington, "and therefore shall not add anything on this score. But I think it one of the most practicable, and surely it

will be among the most desirable and honorable things imaginable to take him prisoner."

The enterprise, we believe, was never attempted. Colonel Hamilton is said to have paralyzed it. He agreed with Washington that there could be little doubt of its success; "but, sir," said he, "have you examined the consequences of it?" "In what respect?" asked the general. "Why," replied Hamilton, "we shall rather lose than gain by removing Sir Henry from the command of the British army, because we perfectly understand his character; and by taking him off we only make way for some other, perhaps an abler officer, whose character and dispositions we have to learn." The shrewd suggestions of his aide-de-camp had their effect on Washington, and the project to abduct Sir Henry was abandoned.*

The spring opened without any material alteration in the dispositions of the armies. Washington at one time expected an attack upon his camp; but Sir William was deficient in the necessary enterprise; he contented himself with sending out parties which foraged the surrounding country for many miles, and scoured part of the Jerseys, bringing in considerable supplies. These forays were in some instances accompanied by wanton excesses and needless bloodshed; the more unjustifiable, as they met with feeble resistance, especially in the Jerseys,

* Wilkinson's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 852.

where it was difficult tc assemble militia in sufficient force to oppose them.

Another ravaging party ascended the Delaware in flat-bottomed boats and galleys; set fire to public storehouses in Bordentown containing provisions and munitions of war; burnt two frigates, several privateers, and a number of vessels of various classes, some of them laden with military stores. Had the armed vessels been sunk, according to the earnest advice of Washington, the greater part of them might have been saved.

A circular letter was sent by Washington on the 20th to all the general officers in camp, requesting their opinions in writing, which of three plans to adopt for the next campaign: to attempt the recovery of Philadelphia; to transfer the war to the north and make an attempt on New York; or to remain quiet in a secure and fortified camp, disciplining and arranging the army until the enemy should begin their operations; then to be governed by circumstances.

Just after the issue of this circular, intelligence received from Congress showed that the ascendency of the cabal was at an end. By a resolution of that body on the 15th, Gates was directed to resume the command of the Northern department, and to proceed forthwith to Fishkill for that purpose. He was invested with powers for completing the works on the Hudson, and authorized to carry on operations against the enemy should any favorable opportunity offer, for which purposes he might call for the

artificers and militia of New York and the Eastern States: but he was not to undertake any expedition against New York without previously consulting the commander-in-chief. Washington was requested to assemble a council of major-generals to determine upon a plan of operations, and Gates and Mifflin, by a subsequent resolution, were ordered to attend that council. This arrangement, putting Gates under Washington's order, evinced the determination of Congress to sustain the latter in his proper authority.

Washington, in a reply to the President of Congress, who had informed him of this arrangement, mentioned the circular he had just issued. "There is not a moment to be delayed," observed he, "in forming some general system, and I only await the arrival of Generals Gates and Mifflin to summon a council for the purpose. The next day (24th) he addressed a letter to Gates, requesting him, should he not find it inconvenient, to favor him with a call at the camp, to discuss the plan of operations for the campaign. A similar invitation was sent by him to Mifflin; who eventually resumed his station in the line.

And here we may note the downfall of the intriguing individual who had given his name to the now extinguished cabal. Conway, after the departure of Lafayette and De Kalb from Albany, had remained but a short time in the command there, being ordered to join the army under General McDougall, stationed at Fishkill

Thence he was soon ordered back to Albany, whereupon he wrote an impertinent letter to the President of Congress, complaining that he was "boxed about in a most indecent manner."

"What is the meaning," demanded he, "of removing me from the scene of action on the opening of the campaign? I did not deserve this burlesque disgrace, and my honor will not permit me to bear it." In a word, he intimated a wish that the president would make his resignation acceptable to Congress.

To his surprise and consternation, his resignation was immediately accepted. He instantly wrote to the president, declaring that his meaning had been misapprehended; and accounted for it by some orthographical or grammatical faults in his letter, being an Irishman, who had learnt his English in France. "I had no thoughts of resigning," adds he, "while there was a prospect of firing a single shot, and especially at the beginning of a campaign which in my opinion will be a very hot one."

All his efforts to get reinstated were unavailing, though he went to Yorktown to make them in person. "Conway's appointment to the inspectorship of the army, with the rank of major-general, after he had insulted the commander-in-chief," observes Wilkinson, "was a splenetic measure of a majority of Congress, as factious as it was ill-judged."

They had become heartily ashamed of it; especially

as it had proved universally unpopular. The office of inspector-general with the rank of major-general, with the proper pay and appointments, were, at Washington's recommendation, voted by them on the 6th of May to Baron Steuben, who had already performed the duties in so satisfactory a manner.

The capture of Burgoyne and his army was now operating with powerful effect on the cabinets of both Eng-

NOTE.

As General Conway takes no further part in the events of this history, we shall briefly dispose of him. Disappointed in his aims, he became irritable in his temper, and offensive in his manners, and frequently indulged in acrimonious language respecting the commander-in-chief, that was highly resented by the army. In consequence of some dispute he became involved in a duel with General John Cadwalader, in which he was severely wounded. Thinking his end was approaching, he addressed the following penitential letter to Washington.

PHILADELPHIA, 23*d July*, 1778.

SIR,—I find myself just able to hold the pen during a few minutes, and take this opportunity of expressing my sincere grief for having done, written, or said anything disagreeable to your Excellency. My career will soon be over, therefore justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are in my eyes the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration, and esteem of these States, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues.

I am, with the greatest respect, etc.,

THOMAS CONWAY.

Contrary to all expectation, he recovered from his wound ; but, finding himself without rank in the army, covered with public opprobrium, and his very name become a byword, he abandoned a country in which he had dishonored himself, and embarked for France in the course of the year.

land and France. With the former it was coupled with the apprehension that France was about to espouse the American cause. The consequence was Lord North's "Conciliatory Bills," as they were called, submitted by him to Parliament, and passed with but slight opposition. One of these bills regulated taxation in the American colonies, in a manner which, it was trusted, would obviate every objection. The other authorized the appointment of commissioners clothed with powers to negotiate with the existing governments; to proclaim a cessation of hostilities; to grant pardons, and to adopt other measures of a conciliatory nature.

"If what was now proposed was a right measure," observes a British historian, "it ought to have been adopted at first, and before the sword was drawn; on the other hand, if the claims of the mother country over her colonies were originally worth contending for, the strength and resources of the nation were not yet so far exhausted as to justify ministers in relinquishing them without a further struggle."*

Intelligence that a treaty between France and the United States had actually been concluded at Paris, induced the British minister to hurry off a draft of the bills to America, to forestall the effects of the treaty upon the public mind. General Tryon caused copies of it to be printed in New York and circulated through the coun-

* Stedman.

try. He sent several of them to General Washington, 15th April, with a request that they should be communicated to the officers and privates of his army. Washington felt the singular impertinence of the request. He transmitted them to Congress, observing that the time to entertain such overtures was past. "Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, can possibly do. A peace on other terms would, if I may be allowed the expression, be a peace of war. The injuries we have received from the British nation were so unprovoked, and have been so great and so many, that they can never be forgotten." These and other objections advanced by him met with the concurrence of Congress, and it was unanimously resolved that no conference could be held, no treaty made with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain, until that power should have withdrawn its fleets and armies, or acknowledged in positive and express terms the independence of the United States.

On the following day, April 23d, a resolution was passed recommending to the different States to pardon, under such restrictions as might be deemed expedient, such of their citizens as, having levied war against the United States, should return to their allegiance before the 16th of June. Copies of this resolution were struck off in English and German, and inclosed by Washington in a letter to General Tryon, in which he indulged in a vein of grave irony.

"SIR,—Your letter of the 17th and a triplicate of the same were duly received. I had the pleasure of seeing the drafts of the two bills, before those which were sent by you came to hand; and I can assure you they were suffered to have a free currency among the officers and men under my command, in whose fidelity to the United States I have the most perfect confidence. The inclosed Gazette, published the 24th at Yorktown, will show you that it is the wish of Congress that they should have an unrestrained circulation.*

"I take the liberty to transmit to you a few printed copies of a resolution of Congress of the 23d instant, and to request that you will be instrumental in communicating its contents, so far as it may be in your power, to the persons who are the objects of its operations. The benevolent purpose it is intended to answer will, I persuade myself, sufficiently recommend it to your candor. I am, Sir," etc.

The tidings of the capitulation of Burgoyne had been equally efficacious in quickening the action of the French cabinet. The negotiations, which had gone on so slowly as almost to reduce our commissioners to despair, were brought to a happy termination, and on the 2d of May,

* In the Gazette of that date the Conciliatory Bills were published by order of Congress; as an instance of their reception by the public, we may mention that in Rhode Island the populace burned them under the gallows.

ten days after the passing by Congress of the resolves just cited, a messenger arrived express from France with two treaties, one of amity and commerce, the other of defensive alliance, signed in Paris on the 6th of February by M. Girard on the part of France, and by Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee on the part of the United States. This last treaty stipulated that, should war ensue between France and England, it should be made a common cause by the contracting parties, in which neither should make truce or peace with Great Britain without the consent of the other, nor either lay down their arms until the independence of the United States was established.

These treaties were unanimously ratified by Congress, and their promulgation was celebrated by public rejoicings throughout the country. The 6th of May was set apart for a military fête at the camp at Valley Forge. The army was assembled in best array; there was solemn thanksgiving by the chaplains at the head of each brigade; after which a grand parade, a national discharge of thirteen guns, a general *feu de joie*, and shouts of the whole army, "Long live the King of France—Long live the friendly European Powers—Huzza for the American States." A banquet succeeded, at which Washington dined in public with all the officers of his army, attended by a band of music. Patriotic toasts were given and heartily cheered. "I never was present," writes a spectator, "where there was such unfeigned and perfect joy

as was discovered in every countenance. Washington retired at five o'clock, on which there was universal huzzaing and clapping of hands—'Long live General Washington.' The non-commissioned officers and privates followed the example of their officers as he rode past their brigades. The shouts continued till he had proceeded a quarter of a mile, and a thousand hats were tossed in the air. Washington and his suite turned round several times and cheered in reply." Gates and Mifflin, if in the camp at the time, must have seen enough to convince them that the commander-in-chief was supreme in the affections of the army.

On the 8th, the council of war, ordered by Congress, was convened, at which were present Major-generals Gates, Greene, Stirling, Mifflin, Lafayette, De Kalb, Armstrong, and Steuben, and Brigadier-generals Knox and Duportail. After the state of the forces, British and American, their number and distribution, had been laid before the council by the commander-in-chief, and a full discussion had been held, it was unanimously determined to remain on the defensive, and not attempt any offensive operation until some opportunity should occur to strike a successful blow. General Lee was not present at the council, but afterward signed the decision.

While the Conciliatory Bills failed thus signally of their anticipated effect upon the Congress and people of the United States, they were regarded with indignation by the royal forces in America, as offering a humiliating

contrast to the high and arrogant tone hitherto indulged towards the "rebels." They struck dismay, too, into the hearts of the American royalists and refugees, who beheld in them sure prognostics of triumph to the cause they had opposed, and of mortification and trouble, if not of exile, to themselves.

The military career of Sir William Howe in the United States was now drawing to a close. His conduct of the war had given much dissatisfaction in England. His enemies observed that everything gained by the troops was lost by the general; that he had suffered an enemy with less than four thousand men to reconquer a province which he had recently reduced, and lay a kind of siege to his army in their winter-quarters;* and that he had brought a sad reverse upon the British arms by failing to coöperate vigorously and efficiently with Burgoyne.

Sir William, on his part, had considered himself slighted by the ministry; his suggestions, he said, were disregarded, and the reinforcements withheld which he considered indispensable for the successful conduct of the war. He had therefore tendered his resignation, which had been promptly accepted, and Sir Henry Clinton ordered to relieve him. Clinton arrived in Philadelphia on the 8th of May, and took command of the army on the 11th.

Sir William Howe was popular among the officers of

* Stedman, vol. i. p. 384.

his army, from his open and engaging manners, and, perhaps, from the loose rule which indulged them in their social excesses. A number of them combined to close his inglorious residence in Philadelphia by a still more inglorious pageant. It was called the MISCHIANZA (or Medley), a kind of regatta and tournament; the former on the Delaware, the latter at a country-seat on its banks.

The regatta was in three divisions, each with its band of music, to which the oarsmen kept time.

The river was crowded with boats, which were kept at a distance from the squadrons of gayly decorated barges, and the houses, balconies, and wharves along the shore were filled with spectators.

We forbear to give the fulsome descriptions of the land part of the Mischianza furnished by various pens; and will content ourselves with the following, from the pen of a British writer who was present. It illustrates sufficiently the absurdity of the scene.

"All the colors of the army were placed in a grand avenue three hundred feet in length, lined with the king's troops, between two triumphal arches, for the two brothers, the Admiral Lord Howe and the General Sir William Howe, to march along in pompous procession, followed by a numerous train of attendants, with seven silken Knights of the Blended Rose, and seven more of the Burning Mountain, and fourteen damsels dressed in the Turkish fashion, to an area of one hundred and fifty yards square, lined also with the king's troops, for the

exhibition of a tilt and tournament, or mock fight of old chivalry, in honor of those two heroes. On the top of each triumphal arch was a figure of Fame bespangled with stars, blowing from her trumpet, in letters of light, *Tes lauriers sont immortels* (Thy laurels are immortal)." On this occasion, according to the same writer, "men compared the importance of Sir William's services with the merit he assumed, and the gravity with which he sustained the most excessive praise and adulation."

The unfortunate Major André, at that time a captain, was very efficient in getting up this tawdry and somewhat effeminate pageant. He had promoted private theatricals during the winter, and aided in painting scenery and devising decorations. He wrote a glowing description of the Mischianza, in a letter to a friend, pronouncing it as perhaps the most splendid entertainment ever given by any army to their general. He figured in it as one of the Knights of the Blended Rose. In a letter written to a lady, in the following year, he alludes to his preparations for it as having made him a complete milliner, and offers his services to furnish her supplies in that department.

At the time of this silken and mock heroic display, the number of British chivalry in Philadelphia was nineteen thousand five hundred and thirty, cooped up in a manner by an American force at Valley Forge, amounting, according to official returns to eleven thousand eight hundred men. Could any triumphant pageant be more ill-placed and ill-timed!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LAFAYETTE DETACHED TO KEEP WATCH ON PHILADELPHIA.—HIS POSITION AT BARREN HILL.—PLAN OF SIR HENRY TO ENTRAP HIM.—WASHINGTON ALARMED FOR HIS SAFETY.—STRATAGEM OF THE MARQUIS.—EXCHANGE OF GENERAL LEE AND COLONEL ETHAN ALLEN.—ALLEN AT VALLEY FORGE.—WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF HIM.—PREPARATIONS IN PHILADELPHIA TO EVACUATE.—WASHINGTON'S MEASURES IN CONSEQUENCE.—ARRIVAL OF COMMISSIONERS FROM ENGLAND.—THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT.—THEIR PROCEEDINGS.—THEIR FAILURE.—THEIR MANIFESTO.

OON after Sir Henry Clinton had taken the command, there were symptoms of an intention to evacuate Philadelphia. Whither the enemy would thence direct their course was a matter of mere conjecture. Lafayette was therefore detached by Washington, with twenty-one hundred chosen men and five pieces of cannon, to take a position nearer the city, where he might be at hand to gain information, watch the movements of the enemy, check their predatory excursions, and fall on their rear when in the act of withdrawing.

The marquis crossed the Schuylkill on the 18th of May, and proceeded to Barren Hill, about half way between Washington's camp and Philadelphia, and about

eleven miles from both. Here he planted his cannon facing the south, with rocky ridges bordering the Schuylkill on his right; woods and stone houses on his left. Behind him the roads forked, one branch leading to Matson's Ford of the Schuylkill, the other by Swedes' Ford to Valley Forge. In advance of his left wing was McLane's company and about fifty Indians. Pickets and videttes were placed in the woods to the south, through which the roads led to Philadelphia, and a body of six hundred Pennsylvania militia were stationed to keep watch on the roads leading to White Marsh.

In the meantime Sir Henry Clinton, having received intelligence through his spies of this movement of Lafayette, concerted a plan to entrap the young French nobleman. Five thousand men were sent out at night, under General Grant, to make a circuitous march by White Marsh, and get in the rear of the Americans; another force under General Grey was to cross to the west side of the Schuylkill, and take post below Barren Hill, while Sir Henry in person was to lead a third division along the Philadelphia road.

The plan came near being completely successful, through the remissness of the Pennsylvania militia, who had left their post of observation. Early in the morning, as Lafayette was conversing with a young girl, who was to go to Philadelphia and collect information, under pretext of visiting her relatives, word was brought that red-coats had been descried in the woods near White

Marsh. Lafayette was expecting a troop of American dragoons in that quarter, who wore scarlet uniforms, and supposed these to be them; to be certain, however, he sent out an officer to reconnoiter. The latter soon came spurring back at full speed. A column of the enemy had pushed forward on the road from White Marsh, were within a mile of the camp, and had possession of the road leading to Valley Forge. Another column was advancing on the Philadelphia road. In fact, the young French general was on the point of being surrounded by a greatly superior force.

Lafayette saw his danger, but maintained his presence of mind. Throwing out small parties of troops to show themselves at various points of the intervening wood, as if an attack on Grant was meditated, he brought that general to a halt, to prepare for action, while he with his main body pushed forward for Matson's Ford on the Schuylkill.

The alarm-guns at sunrise had apprised Washington that the detachment under Lafayette was in danger. The troops at Valley Forge were instantly under arms. Washington, with his aides-de-camp and some of his general officers, galloped to the summit of a hill, and anxiously reconnoitered the scene of action with a glass. His solicitude for the marquis was soon relieved. The stratagem of the youthful warrior had been crowned with success. He completely gained the march upon General Grant, reached Matson's Ford in safety, crossed it in

great order, and took a strong position on high grounds which commanded it. The enemy arrived at the river just in time for a skirmish as the artillery was crossing. Seeing that Lafayette had extricated himself from their hands, and was so strongly posted, they gave over all attack, and returned somewhat disconcerted to Philadelphia; while the youthful marquis rejoined the army at Valley Forge, where he was received with acclamations.

The exchange of General Lee for General Prescott, so long delayed by various impediments, had recently been effected; and Lee was reinstated in his position of second in command. Colonel Ethan Allen, also, had been released from his long captivity in exchange for Colonel Campbell. Allen paid a visit to the camp at Valley Forge, where he had much to tell of his various vicissitudes and hardships. Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress suggesting that something should be done for Allen, observes: "His fortitude and firmness seem to have placed him out of the reach of misfortune. There is an original something about him that commands admiration, and his long captivity and sufferings have only served to increase, if possible, his enthusiastic zeal. He appears very desirous of rendering his services to the States, and of being employed; and at the same time, he does not discover any ambition for high rank."

In a few days, a brevet commission of colonel arrived for Allen; but he had already left camp for his home in Vermont, where he appears to have hung up his sword;

for we meet with no further achievements by him on record.

Indications continued to increase of the departure of troops from Philadelphia. The military quarters were in a stir and bustle; effects were packed up; many sold at auction; baggage and heavy cannon embarked; transports fitted up for the reception of horses, and hay taken on board. Was the whole army to leave the city, or only a part? The former was probable. A war between France and England appeared to be impending: in that event, Philadelphia would be an ineligible position for the British army.

New York, it was concluded, would be the place of destination; either as a rendezvous, or a post whence to attempt the occupation of the Hudson. Would they proceed thither by land or water? Supposing the former, Washington would gladly have taken post in Jersey, to oppose or harass them, on their march through that State. His camp, however, was encumbered by upwards of three thousand sick; and covered a great amount of military stores. He dared not weaken it by detaching a sufficient force; especially as it was said the enemy intended to attack him before their departure.

For three weeks affairs remained in this state. Washington held his army ready to march toward the Hudson at a moment's warning; and sent General Maxwell with a brigade of Jersey troops, to coöperate with Major-general Dickinson and the militia of that State, in breaking

down the bridges and harassing the enemy, should they actually attempt to march through it. At the same time he wrote to General Gates, who was now at his post on the Hudson, urging him to call in as large a force of militia as he could find subsistence for, and to be on the alert for the protection of that river.

In the meantime, the commissioners empowered under the new Conciliatory Bills to negotiate the restoration of peace between Great Britain and her former colonies, arrived in the Delaware in the *Trident* ship of war. These were Frederick Howard, Earl of Carlisle; William Eden (afterwards Lord Auckland), brother of the last colonial governor of Maryland; and George Johnstone, sometimes called commodore, from having served in the navy, but more commonly known as Governor Johnstone, having held that office in Florida. He was now a member of Parliament, and in the opposition. Their secretary was the celebrated Dr. Adam Ferguson, an Edinburgh professor; author of a Roman History, and who in his younger days (he was now about fifty-five years of age) had been a "fighting chaplain at Fontenoy."

The choice of commissioners gave rise to much criticism and cavil: especially that of Lord Carlisle, a young man of fashion, amiable and intelligent, it is true, but unfitted by his soft European habits for such a mission. "To captivate the rude members of Congress," said Wilkes, "and civilize the wild inhabitants of an unpolished country, a noble peer was very properly appointed

chief of the honorable embassy. His lordship, to the surprise and admiration of that part of the New World, carried with him a green ribbon, the gentle manners, winning behavior, and soft insinuating address of a modern man of quality and a professed courtier. The muses and graces with a group of little laughing loves were in his train, and for the first time crossed the Atlantic." *

Mr. Eden, by his letter still in existence,† appears to have been unkindly disposed towards America. Johnstone was evidently the strongest member of the commission. Fox pronounced him "the only one who could have the ear of the people in America;" he alone had been their friend in Great Britain, and was acquainted with the people of Pennsylvania.

The commissioners landed at Philadelphia on the 6th of June, and discovered, to their astonishment, that they had come out, as it were, in the dark, on a mission in which but a half confidence had been reposed in them by government. Three weeks before their departure from England, orders had been sent out to Sir Henry Clinton to evacuate Philadelphia and concentrate his forces at New York; yet these orders were never imparted to them. Their letters and speeches testify their surprise and indignation at finding their plan of operations so completely disconcerted by their own cabinet. "We found everything here," writes Lord Carlisle, "in great

* 19 *Parliamentary Hist.*, 1338.

† Force's *Am. Archives*, vol. i. 962.

confusion; the army upon the point of leaving the town, and about three thousand of the miserable inhabitants embarked on board of our ships, to convey them from a place where they think they would receive no mercy from those who will take possession after us."

So Governor Johnstone, in speeches subsequently made in Parliament: "On my arrival, the orders for the evacuation had been made public—the city was in the utmost consternation: a more affecting spectacle of woe I never beheld." And again: "The commissioners were received at Philadelphia with all the joy which a generous people could express. Why were you so long a-coming? was the general cry. Do not abandon us. Retain the army and send them against Washington, and the affair is over. Ten thousand men will arm for you in this province, and ten thousand in the lower counties, the moment you take the field and can get arms. The declarations were general and notorious, and I am persuaded, if we had been at liberty to have acted in the field, our most sanguine expectations would have been fulfilled."

The orders for evacuation, however, were too peremptory to be evaded, but Johnstone declared that if he had known of them, he never would have gone on the mission. The commissioners had prepared a letter for Congress, merely informing that body of their arrival and powers, and their disposition to promote a reconciliation, intending quietly to await an answer; but the unexpected situation of affairs occasioned by the order for evacua-

tion, obliged them to alter their resolution, and to write one of a different character, bringing forward at once all the powers delegated to them.

On the 9th June, Sir Henry Clinton informed Washington of the arrival of the commissioners, and requested a passport for their secretary, Dr. Ferguson, the historian, to proceed to Yorktown bearing a letter to Congress. Washington sent to Congress a copy of Sir Henry's letter, but did not consider himself at liberty to grant the passport until authorized by them.

Without waiting the result, the commissioners forwarded, by the ordinary military post, their letter, accompanied by the "Conciliatory Acts" and other documents. They were received by Congress on the 13th. The letter of the commissioners was addressed "to His Excellency, Henry Laurens, the President and others, the members of Congress." The reading of the letter was interrupted; and it came near being indignantly rejected, on account of expressions disrespectful to France; charging it with being the insidious enemy of both England and her colonies, and interposing its pretended friendship to the latter "only to prevent reconciliation and prolong this destructive war." Several days elapsed before the Congress recovered sufficient equanimity to proceed with the despatches of the commisioners, and deliberate on the propositions they contained.

In their reply, signed by the president (June 17th), they observed, that nothing but an earnest desire to

spare further effusion of blood, could have induced them to read a paper containing expressions so disrespectful to his most Christian Majesty, or to consider propositions so derogatory to the honor of an independent nation; and in conclusion, they expressed a readiness to treat as soon as the king of Great Britain should demonstrate a sincere disposition for peace, either by an explicit acknowledgment of the independence of the States, or by the withdrawal of his fleets and armies.

We will not follow the commissioners through their various attempts, overtly and covertly, to forward the object of their mission. We cannot, however, pass unnoticed an intimation conveyed from Governor Johnstone to General Joseph Reed, at this time an influential member of Congress, that effectual services on his part to restore the union of the two countries might be rewarded by ten thousand pounds sterling, and any office in the colonies in His Majesty's gift. To this, Reed made his brief and memorable reply: "I am not worth purchasing; but such as I am, the king of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it."

A letter was also written by Johnstone to Robert Morris, the celebrated financier, then also a member of Congress, containing the following significant paragraph: "I believe the men who have conducted the affairs of America incapable of being influenced by improper motives; but in all such transactions there is risk; and I think that whoever ventures, should be assured, at the

same time, that honor and emolument should naturally follow the fortune of those who have steered the vessel in the storm and brought her safely into port. I think Washington and the President have a right to every favor that grateful nations can bestow, if they could once more unite our interest, and spare the miseries and devastation of war."

These transactions and letters being communicated to Congress, were pronounced by them daring and atrocious attempts to corrupt their integrity, and they resolved that it was incompatible with their honor to hold any correspondence or intercourse with the commissioner who made it; especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty was concerned.

The commissioners, disappointed in their hopes of influencing Congress, attempted to operate on the feelings of the public, at one time by conciliatory appeals, at another by threats and denunciations. Their last measure was to publish a manifesto recapitulating their official proceedings; stating the refusal of Congress to treat with them, and offering to treat within forty days with deputies from all or any of the colonies or provincial Assemblies; holding forth, at the same time, the usual offers of conditional amnesty. This measure, like all which had preceded it, proved ineffectual; the commissioners embarked for England, and so terminated this tardy and blundering attempt of the British Government

and its agents to effect a reconciliation—the last attempt that was made.

Lord Carlisle, who had taken the least prominent part in these transactions, thus writes in the course of them to his friend, the witty George Selwyn, and his letter may serve as a peroration. "I inclose you our manifesto, which you will never read. 'Tis a sort of dying speech of the commission: an effort from which I expect little success. . . . . Everything is upon a great scale upon this continent. The rivers are immense; the climate violent in heat and cold; the prospects magnificent; the thunder and lightning tremendous. The disorders incident to the country make every constitution tremble. We have nothing on a great scale with us but our blunders, our misconduct, our ruin, our losses, our disgraces and misfortunes, that will mark the reign of a prince who deserves better treatment and kinder fortunes."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

PREPARATIONS TO EVACUATE PHILADELPHIA.—WASHINGTON CALLS A COUNCIL OF WAR.—LEE OPPOSED TO ANY ATTACK.—PHILADELPHIA EVACUATED.—MOVEMENTS IN PURSUIT OF SIR HENRY CLINTON.—ANOTHER COUNCIL OF WAR.—CONFLICT OF OPINIONS.—CONTRADICTORY CONDUCT OF LEE RESPECTING THE COMMAND.—THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH COURT-HOUSE.—SUBSEQUENT MARCH OF THE ARMIES.

THE delay of the British to evacuate Philadelphia tasked the sagacity of Washington, but he supposed it to have been caused by the arrival of the commissioners from Great Britain. The force in the city in the meantime had been much reduced. Five thousand men had been detached to aid in a sudden descent on the French possessions in the West Indies; three thousand more to Florida. Most of the cavalry with other troops had been shipped with the provision train and heavy baggage to New York. The effective force remaining with Sir Henry was now about nine or ten thousand men; that under Washington was a little more than twelve thousand Continentals, and about thirteen hundred militia. It had already acquired considerable proficiency in tactics and field manœuvring under the diligent instructions of Steuben.

Early in June, it was evident that a total evacuation of the city was on the point of taking place; and circumstances convinced Washington that the march of the main body would be through the Jerseys. Some of his officers thought differently, especially General Lee, who had now the command of a division composed of Poor, Varnum, and Huntington's brigades. Lee, since his return to the army, had resumed somewhat of his old habit of cynical supervision, and had his circle of admirers, among whom he indulged in caustic comments on military affairs and the merits of commanders.

On the present occasion he addressed a letter to Washington, dated June 15th, suggesting other plans which the enemy might have in view. "Whether they do or do not adopt any of these plans," added he, "there can be no inconvenience arise from considering the subject, nor from devising means of defeating their purposes, on the supposition that they will."

Washington, in his reply, gave the suggestions of Lee a candid and respectful consideration, but in the course of his letter took occasion to hint a little gentle admonition.

"I shall always be happy," writes he, "in a free communication of your sentiments upon any important subject relative to the service, and only beg that they may come directly to myself. The custom which many officers have, of speaking freely, and reprobating measures, which, upon investigation, may be found to be unavoid-

able, is never found to be productive of good, but often of very mischievous consequences."

In consequence, probably, of the suggestions of Lee, Washington called a general council of war on the 17th, to consider what measures to adopt, whether to undertake any enterprise against the enemy in their present circumstances—whether the army should remain in its actual position, until the final evacuation had taken place, or move immediately toward the Delaware—whether, should the enemy march through the Jerseys, it would be advisable to attack them while on the way, or to push on directly to the Hudson, and secure that important communication between the Eastern and Southern States? In case an attack while on the march were determined on, should it be a partial or a general one?

Lee spoke eloquently on the occasion. He was opposed to an attack of any kind. He would make a bridge of gold for the enemy. They were nearly equal in number to the Americans, and far superior in discipline; in fact, never had troops been better disciplined. An attack would endanger the safety of the cause. It was now in a prosperous state, in consequence of the foreign alliance just formed; all ought not to be put at risk at the very moment of making such an alliance. He advised merely to follow the enemy, observe their motions, and prevent them from committing any excesses.

Lee's opinions had still great weight with the army; most of the officers, both foreign and American, con-

curred with him. Greene, Lafayette, Wayne, and Cadwalader, thought differently. They could not brook that the enemy should evacuate the city, and make a long march through the country unmolested. An opportunity might present itself, amid the bustle and confusion of departure, or while embarrassed in defiles with a cumbrous baggage train, of striking some signal blow, that would indemnify them for all they had suffered in their long and dreary encampment at Valley Forge.

Washington's heart was with this latter counsel; but seeing such want of unanimity among his generals, he requested their opinions in writing. Before these were given in, word was brought that the enemy had actually evacuated the city.

Sir Henry had taken his measures with great secrecy and despatch. The army commenced moving at three o'clock on the morning of the 18th, retiring to a point of land below the town formed by the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill, and crossing the former river in boats. By ten o'clock in the morning the rear-guard landed on the Jersey shore.

On the first intelligence of this movement, Washington detached General Maxwell with his brigade, to coöperate with General Dickinson and the New Jersey militia in harassing the enemy on their march. He sent General Arnold, also, with a force to take command of Philadelphia, that officer being not yet sufficiently recovered from his wound for field service; then breaking up his camp

at Valley Forge, he pushed forward with his main force in pursuit of the enemy.

As the route of the latter lay along the eastern bank of the Delaware as high as Trenton, Washington was obliged to make a considerable circuit, so as to cross the river higher up at Coryell's Ferry, near the place where eighteen months previously he had crossed to attack the Hessians.

On the 20th, he writes to General Gates: "I am now with the main body of the army within ten miles of Coryell's Ferry. General Lee is advanced with six brigades, and will cross to-night or to-morrow morning. By the last intelligence the enemy are near Mount Holly, and moving very slowly; but as there are so many roads open to them, their route could not be ascertained. I shall enter the Jerseys to-morrow, and give you the earliest notice of their movements, and whatever may affect you."

Heavy rains and sultry summer heat retarded his movements; but the army crossed on the 24th. The British were now at Moorestown and Mount Holly. Thence they might take the road on the left for Brunswick, and so on to Staten Island and New York; or the road to the right through Monmouth, by the Heights of Middletown to Sandy Hook. Uncertain which they might adopt, Washington detached Colonel Morgan with six hundred picked men to reinforce Maxwell, and hang on their rear; while he himself pushed forward with the

main body toward Princeton, cautiously keeping along the mountainous country to the left of the most northern road.

The march of Sir Henry was very slow. His army was encumbered with baggage and provisions, and all the nameless superfluities in which British officers are prone to indulge. His train of wheel carriages and bat horses was twelve miles in extent. He was retarded by heavy rain and intolerable heat; bridges had to be built and causeways constructed over streams and marshes, where they had been destroyed by the Americans.

From his dilatory movements, Washington suspected Sir Henry of a design to draw him down into the level country, and then, by a rapid movement on his right, to gain possession of the strong ground above him, and bring him to a general action on disadvantageous terms. He himself was inclined for a general action whenever it could be made on suitable ground; he halted, therefore, at Hopewell, about five miles from Princeton, and held another council of war, while his troops were reposing and refreshing themselves. The result of it, writes his aide-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton, "would have done honor to the most honorable society of midwives, and to them only." * The purport was to keep at a distance from the enemy, and annoy them by detachments. Lee, according to Hamilton, was the prime mover of this plan: in pur-

* MS. letter of Hamilton to Elias Boudinot.

suance of which a detachment of fifteen hundred men was sent off under Brigadier-general Scott, to join the other troops near the enemy's line. Lee was even opposed to sending so large a number.

Generals Greene, Wayne, and Lafayette were in the minority in the council, and subsequently gave separately the same opinion in writing, that the rear of the enemy should be attacked by a strong detachment, while the main army should be so disposed as to give a general battle, should circumstances render it advisable. As this opinion coincided with his own, Washington determined to act upon it.

Sir Henry Clinton in the meantime had advanced to Allentown, on his way to Brunswick, to embark on the Raritan. Finding the passage of that river likely to be strongly disputed by the forces under Washington, and others advancing from the north under Gates, he changed his plan, and turned to the right by a road leading through Freehold to Navesink and Sandy Hook; to embark at the latter place.

Washington, no longer in doubt as to the route of the enemy's march, detached Wayne with one thousand men to join the advanced corps, which, thus augmented, was upward of four thousand strong. The command of the advance properly belonged to Lee as senior major-general; but it was eagerly solicited by Lafayette, as an attack by it was intended, and Lee was strenuously opposed to everything of the kind. Washington willingly

gave his consent, provided General Lee were satisfied with the arrangement. The latter ceded the command without hesitation, observing to the marquis that he was well pleased to be freed from all responsibility in executing plans which he was sure would fail.

Lafayette set out on the 25th to form a junction as soon as possible with the force under General Scott; while Washington, leaving his baggage at Kingston, moved with the main body to Cranberry, three miles in the rear of the advanced corps, to be ready to support it.

Scarce, however, had Lee relinquished the command, when he changed his mind. In a note to Washington, he declared that, in assenting to the arrangement, he had considered the command of the detachment one more fitting a young volunteering general than a veteran like himself, second in command in the army. He now viewed it in a different light. Lafayette would be at the head of all the continental parties already in the line; six thousand men at least; a command next to that of the commander-in-chief. Should the detachment march, therefore, he entreated to have the command of it. So far he spoke personally, "but," added he, "to speak as an officer, I do not think that this detachment ought to march at all, until at least the head of the enemy's right column has passed Cranberry; then if it is necessary to march the whole army, I cannot see any impropriety in the marquis' commanding this detachment, or a greater, as an advanced guard of the army; but if this detach-

ment, with Maxwell's corps, Scott's, Morgan's, and Jackson's, is to be considered as a separate, chosen, active corps, and put under the marquis' command until the enemy leave the Jerseys, both myself and Lord Stirling will be disgraced."

Washington was perplexed how to satisfy Lee's punctilious claims without wounding the feelings of Lafayette. A change in the disposition of the enemy's line of march furnished an expedient. Sir Henry Clinton, finding himself harassed by light troops on the flanks, and in danger of an attack in the rear, placed all his baggage in front under the convoy of Knyphausen, while he threw the main strength of his army in the rear under Lord Cornwallis.

This made it necessary for Washington to strengthen his advanced corps; and he took this occasion to detach Lee, with Scott's and Varnum's brigades, to support the force under Lafayette. As Lee was the senior major-general, this gave him the command of the whole advance. Washington explained the matter in a letter to the marquis, who resigned the command to Lee when the latter joined him on the 27th. That evening the enemy encamped on high ground near Monmouth Court-house. Lee encamped with the advance at Englishtown, about five miles distant. The main body was three miles in his rear.

About sunset Washington rode forward to the advance, and anxiously reconnoitered Sir Henry's position. It was protected by woods and morasses, and too strong

to be attacked with a prospect of success. Should the enemy, however, proceed ten or twelve miles further unmolested, they would gain the heights of Middletown, and be on ground still more difficult. To prevent this, he resolved that an attack should be made on their rear early in the morning, as soon as their front should be in motion. This plan he communicated to General Lee, in presence of his officers, ordering him to make dispositions for the attack, keeping his troops lying on their arms, ready for action on the shortest notice; a disposition he intended to observe with his own troops. This done, he rode back to the main body.

Apprehensive that Sir Henry might decamp in the night, Washington sent orders to Lee before midnight, to detach six or seven hundred men to lie near the enemy, watch and give notice of their movements, and hold them in check when on the march, until the rest of the troops could come up. General Dickinson was charged by Lee with this duty. Morgan was likewise stationed with his corps to be ready for skirmishing.

Early in the morning, Washington received an express from Dickinson, informing him that the enemy were in motion. He instantly sent orders to Lee to push forward and attack them, unless there should be powerful reasons to the contrary, adding, that he was coming on to support him. For that purpose he immediately set forward with his own troops, ordering them to throw by their knapsacks and blankets.

Knyphausen, with the British van-guard, had begun about daybreak to descend into the valley between Monmouth Court-house and Middletown. To give the long train of wagons and pack-horses time to get well on the way, Sir Henry Clinton with his choice troops remained in camp on the heights of Freehold, until eight o'clock, when he likewise resumed the line of march toward Middletown.

In the meantime Lee, on hearing of the early movement of the enemy, had advanced with the brigades of Wayne and Maxwell, to support the light troops engaged in skirmishing. The difficulty of reconnoitering a country cut up by woods and morasses, and the perplexity occasioned by contradictory reports, embarrassed his movements. Being joined by Lafayette with the main body of the advance, he had now about four thousand men at his command, independent of those under Morgan and General Dickinson. Arriving on the heights of Freehold, and riding forward with General Wayne to an open place to reconnoiter, Lee caught sight of a force under march, but partly hidden from view by intervening woods. Supposing it to be a mere covering party of about two thousand men, he detached Wayne with seven hundred men and two pieces of artillery, to skirmish in its rear and hold it in check; while he, with the rest of his force, taking a shorter road through the woods, would get in front of it, and cut it off from the main body. He at the same time sent a message to Washington, appris-

ing him of this movement and of his certainty of success.*

Washington in the meantime was on his march with the main body, to support the advance, as he had promised. The booming of cannon at a distance indicated that the attack so much desired had commenced, and caused him to quicken his march. Arrived near Freehold church, where the road forked, he detached Greene with part of his forces to the right, to flank the enemy in the rear of Monmouth Court-house, while he, with the rest of the column, would press forward by the other road.

Washington had alighted while giving these directions, and was standing with his arm thrown over his horse, when a countryman rode up and said the continental troops were retreating. Washington was provoked at what he considered a false alarm. The man pointed, as his authority, to an American fifer who just then came up in breathless affright. The fifer was ordered into custody to prevent his spreading an alarm among the troops who were advancing, and was threatened with a flogging should he repeat the story.

Springing on his horse, Washington had moved forward but a short distance when he met other fugitives, one in the garb of a soldier, who all concurred in the report. He now sent forward Colonels Fitzgerald and Harrison, to learn the truth, while he himself spurred past

* Evidence of Dr. McHenry on the Court-Martial.

Freehold meeting-house. Between that edifice and the morass beyond it, he met Grayson's and Patton's regiments in most disorderly retreat, jaded with heat and fatigue. Riding up to the officer at their head, Washington demanded whether the whole advanced corps were retreating. The officer believed they were.

It seemed incredible. There had been scarce any firing—Washington had received no notice of the retreat from Lee. He was still almost inclined to doubt, when the heads of several columns of the advance began to appear. It was too evident—the whole advance was falling back on the main body, and no notice had been given to him. One of the first officers that came up was Colonel Shreve, at the head of his regiment; Washington, greatly surprised and alarmed, asked the meaning of this retreat. The colonel smiled significantly—he did not know—he had retreated by order. There had been no fighting excepting a slight skirmish with the enemy's cavalry, which had been repulsed.

A suspicion flashed across Washington's mind, of wrong-headed conduct on the part of Lee, to mar the plan of attack adopted contrary to his counsels. Ordering Colonel Shreve to march his men over the morass, halt them on the hill beyond and refresh them, he galloped forward to stop the retreat of the rest of the advance, his indignation kindling as he rode. At the rear of the regiment he met Major Howard; he, too, could give no reason for the retreat, but seemed provoked at

it—declaring that he had never seen the like. Another officer exclaimed with an oath that they were flying from a shadow.

Arriving at a rising ground, Washington beheld Lee approaching with the residue of his command in full retreat. By this time he was thoroughly exasperated.

"What is the meaning of all this, sir?" demanded he, in the sternest and even fiercest tone, as Lee rode up to him.

Lee for a moment was disconcerted, and hesitated in making a reply, for Washington's aspect, according to Lafayette, was terrible.

"I desire to know the meaning of this disorder and confusion," was again demanded still more vehemently.

Lee, stung by the manner more than the words of the demand, made an angry reply, and provoked still sharper expressions, which have been variously reported. He attempted a hurried explanation. His troops had been thrown into confusion by contradictory intelligence; by disobedience of orders; by the meddling and blundering of individuals; and he had not felt disposed, he said, to beard the whole British army with troops in such a situation.

"I have certain information," rejoined Washington, "that it was merely a strong covering party."

"That may be, but it was stronger than mine, and I did not think proper to run such a risk."

"I am very sorry," replied Washington, "that you

undertook the command, unless you meant to fight the enemy."

"I did not think it prudent to bring on a general engagement."

"Whatever your opinion may have been," replied Washington, disdainfully, "I expected my orders would have been obeyed."

This all passed rapidly, and, as, it were, in flashes, for there was no time for parley. The enemy were within a quarter of an hour's march. Washington's appearance had stopped the retreat. The fortunes of the day were to be retrieved, if possible, by instant arrangements. These he proceeded to make with great celerity. The place was favorable for a stand; it was a rising ground, to which the enemy could approach only over a narrow causeway. The rallied troops were hastily formed upon this eminence. Colonels Stewart and Ramsey, with two batteries, were stationed in a covert of woods on their left, to protect them and keep the enemy at bay. Colonel Oswald was posted for the same purpose on a height, with two field-pieces. The promptness with which everything was done showed the effects of the Baron Steuben's discipline.

In the interim, Lee, being asked about the disposition of some of the troops, replied that he could give no orders in the matter, as he supposed General Washington intended he should have no further command.

Shortly after this, Washington, having made all his

arrangements with great despatch, but admirable clearness and precision, rode back to Lee in calmer mood, and inquired, "Will you retain the command on this height or not? if you will, I will return to the main body, and have it formed on the next height."

"It is equal to me where I command," replied Lee.

"I expect you will take proper means for checking the enemy," rejoined Washington.

"Your orders shall be obeyed; and I shall not be the first to leave the ground," was the reply.

A warm cannonade by Oswald, Stewart, and Ramsey, had the desired effect. The enemy were brought to a stand, and Washington had time to gallop back and bring on the main body. This he formed on an eminence, with a wood in the rear and the morass in front. The left wing was commanded by Lord Stirling, who had with him a detachment of artillery and several field-pieces. General Greene was on his right.

Lee had maintained his advanced position with great spirit, but was at length obliged to retire. He brought off his troops in good order across a causeway which traversed the morass in front of Lord Stirling. As he had promised, he was the last to leave the ground. Having formed his men in a line, beyond the morass, he rode up to Washington. "Here, sir, are my troops," said he; "how is it your pleasure I should dispose of them?" Washington saw that the poor fellows were exhausted by marching, counter-marching, hard fighting, and the intol-

erable heat of the weather: he ordered Lee, therefore, to repair with them to the rear of Englishtown, and assemble there all the scattered fugitives he might meet with.

The batteries under the direction of Lord Stirling opened a brisk and well-sustained fire upon the enemy; who, finding themselves warmly opposed in front, attempted to turn the left flank of the Americans, but were driven back by detached parties of infantry stationed there. They then attempted the right; but here were met by General Greene, who had planted his artillery under Knox, on a commanding ground, and not only checked them but enfiladed those who were in front of the left wing. Wayne too, with an advanced party posted in an orchard, and partly sheltered by a barn, kept up a severe and well-directed fire upon the enemy's centre. Repeated attempts were made to dislodge him, but in vain. Colonel Monckton of the royal grenadiers, who had distinguished himself and been wounded in the battle of Long Island, now undertook to drive Wayne from his post at the point of the bayonet. Having made a brief harangue to his men, he led them on in column. Wayne's men reserved their fire, until Colonel Monckton, waving his sword, called out to his grenadiers to charge. At that instant a sheeted volley laid him low, and made great slaughter in his column, which was again repulsed.

The enemy at length gave way, and fell back to the ground which Lee had occupied in the morning. Here

their flanks were secured by woods and morasses, and their front could only be approached across a narrow causeway.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of the position, Washington prepared to attack it; ordering General Poor with his own and the Carolina brigade, to move round upon their right, and General Woodford on their left; while the artillery should gall them in front. Before these orders could be carried into effect the day was at an end. Many of the soldiers had sunk upon the ground, overcome by fatigue and the heat of the weather; all needed repose. The troops, therefore, which had been in the advance, were ordered to lie on their arms on the ground they occupied, so as to be ready to make the attack by daybreak. The main army did the same, on the field of action, to be at hand to support them. Washington lay on his cloak at the foot of a tree, with Lafayette beside him, talking over the strange conduct of Lee; whose disorderly retreat had come so near being fatal to the army.

It was indeed a matter of general perplexity, to which the wayward character of Lee greatly contributed. Some who recollected his previous opposition to all plan of attack, almost suspected him of willfully aiming to procure a defeat. It would appear, however, that he had been really surprised and thrown into confusion by a move of Sir Henry Clinton, who, seeing the force under Lee descending on his rear from Freehold heights, had suddenly turned upon it, aided by troops from Knyp-

hausen's division, to oblige it to call to its assistance the flanking parties under Morgan and Dickinson, which were threatening his baggage train. So that Lee, instead of a mere covering party which he had expected to cut off, had found himself front to front with the whole rear division of the British army; and that too, on unfavorable ground, with a deep ravine and a morass in his rear.

He endeavored to form his troops for action. Oswald's artillery began to play, and there was some skirmishing with the enemy's light horse, in which they were repulsed. But mistakes occurred; orders were misunderstood; one corps after another fell back, until the whole retreated, almost without a struggle, before an inferior force. Lee, himself, seemed to partake of the confusion; taking no pains to check the retrograde movement, nor to send notice of it to the main body upon which they were to fall back.

What opinions Washington gave on the subject, in the course of his conversation with the marquis, the latter does not tell us; after it was ended, he wrapped himself in his cloak, and slept at the foot of the tree, among his soldiers.

At daybreak the drums beat the reveillé. The troops roused themselves from their heavy sleep, and prepared for action. To their surprise, the enemy had disappeared: there was a deserted camp, in which were found four officers and about forty privates, too severely wounded to be conveyed away by the retreating army

Sir Henry Clinton, it appeared, had allowed his wearied troops but short repose on the preceding night. At ten o'clock, when the American forces were buried in their first sleep, he had set forward to join the division under Knyphausen, which, with the baggage train, having pushed on during the action, was far on the road to Middletown. So silent had been his retreat, that it was unheard by General Poor's advance party, which lay near by.

The distance to which the enemy must by this time have attained, the extreme heat of the weather, and the fatigued condition of the troops, deterred Washington from continuing a pursuit through a country where the roads were deep and sandy, and there was great scarcity of water. Besides, persons well acquainted with the country assured him that it would be impossible to annoy the enemy in their embarkation, as he must approach the place by a narrow passage, capable of being defended by a few men against his whole force. Detaching General Maxwell's brigade and Morgan's rifle corps, therefore, to hang on the rear of the enemy, prevent depredation and encourage desertions, he determined to shape his course with his main body by Brunswick toward the Hudson, lest Sir Henry should have any design upon the posts there.

The American loss in the recent battle was eight officers and sixty-one privates killed, and about one hundred and sixty wounded. Among the slain were Lieutenant-

colonel Bonner of Pennsylvania, and Major Dickinson of Virginia, both greatly regretted.

The officers who had charge of the burying parties reported that they found two hundred and forty-five non-commissioned officers and privates, and four officers left dead by the enemy on the field of battle. There were fresh graves in the vicinity also, into which the enemy had hurried their slain before retreating. The number of prisoners, including those found wounded, was upwards of one hundred.

Some of the troops on both sides had perished in the morass, some were found on the border of a stream which ran through it among alder bushes, whither, overcome by heat, fatigue, and thirst, they had crawled to drink and die.

Among the gallant slain of the enemy was Colonel Monckton, who fell so bravely when leading on his grenadiers. His remains were interred in the burial-ground of the Freehold meeting-house, upon a stone of which edifice his name is rudely cut.*

After giving his troops a day's repose Washington decamped on the 30th. His march lay through a country destitute of water, with deep, sandy roads wearying to the feet, and reflecting the intolerable heat and glare of a July sun. Many of the troops, harassed by previous fatigue, gave out by the way. Some few died, and a num-

* Lossing's *Field Book of the Revolution*, ii. 363.

ber of horses were likewise lost. Washington, ever considerate of the health and comfort of his men, encamped near Brunswick on open, airy grounds, and gave them time to repose; while Lieutenant-colonel Aaron Burr, at that time a young and enterprising officer, was sent on a reconnoitering expedition, to learn the movements and intentions of the enemy. He was authorized to despatch trusty persons into New York to make observations, collect reports, and get newspapers. Others were to be sent to the heights of Bergen, Weehawk, and Hoboken, which command a view of the bay and river, to observe the situation of the enemy's forces, and note whether any movement among the shipping gave signs of an expedition up the Hudson; the immediate object of solicitude.

Sir Henry Clinton with the royal army had arrived at the Highlands of Navesink, in the neighborhood of Sandy Hook, on the 30th of June. He had lost many men by desertion, Hessians especially, during his march through the Jerseys, which, with his losses by killed, wounded, and captured, had diminished his army more than two thousand men. The storms of the preceding winter had cut off the peninsula of Sandy Hook from the main-land, and formed a deep channel between them. Fortunately the squadron of Lord Howe had arrived the day before, and was at anchor within the Hook. A bridge was immediately made across the channel with the boats of the ships, over which the army passed to the Hook on the 5th of July, and thence was distributed.

It was now encamped in three divisions on Staten Island, Long Island, and the Island of New York: apparently without any immediate design of offensive operations. There was a vigorous press in New York to man the large ships and fit them for sea, but this was in consequence of a report that a French fleet had arrived on the coast.

Relieved by this intelligence from all apprehensions of an expedition by the enemy up the Hudson, Washington relaxed the speed of his movements, and halted for a few days at Paramus, sparing his troops as much as possible during the extreme summer heats.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LEE AND WASHINGTON RELATIVE TO THE AFFAIR OF MONMOUTH.—LEE ASKS A TRIAL BY COURT-MARTIAL.—THE VERDICT.—LEE'S SUBSEQUENT HISTORY.

HAVING brought the army to a halt, we have time to notice a correspondence between General Lee and Washington immediately subsequent to the affair of Monmouth. The pride of the general had been deeply wounded by the rebuke he had received on the field of battle. On the following day (June 29th) he addressed a note to Washington on the subject. By mistake it was dated July 1st. "From the knowledge I have of your Excellency's character," writes he, "I must conclude that nothing but the misinformation of some very stupid, or misrepresentation of some very wicked person, could have occasioned your making use of so very singular expressions as you did on my coming up to the ground where you had taken post. They implied that I was guilty either of disobedience of orders, want of conduct, or want of courage. Your Excellency will therefore infinitely oblige me by letting me know on which of these three articles you ground your

charge. I ever had, and hope ever shall have, the greatest respect and veneration for General Washington. I think him endowed with many great and good qualities; but in this instance, I must pronounce that he has been guilty of an act of cruel injustice towards a man, who certainly has some pretensions to the regard of every servant of this country. And I think, sir, I have a right to demand some reparation for the injury committed; and, unless I can obtain it, I must in justice to myself, when this campaign is closed, which I believe will close the war, retire from the service at the head of which is placed a man capable of offering such injuries. But at the same time, in justice to you, I must repeat that I from my soul believe that it is not a motion of your own breast, but instigated by some of those dirty earwigs, who will forever insinuate themselves near persons high in office: for I really am convinced that when General Washington acts from himself, no man in his army will have reason to complain of injustice or indecorum."

The following was Washington's reply:—

"Sir,—I received your letter (dated through mistake the 1st of July), expressed as I conceive in terms highly improper. I am not conscious of making use of any very singular expressions at the time of meeting you, as you intimate. What I recollect to have said was dictated by duty and warranted by the occasion. As soon as circumstances will permit, you shall have an opportunity of

justifying yourself to the army, to Congress, to America, and to the world in general; or of convincing them that you were guilty of a breach of orders, and of misbehavior before the enemy on the 28th instant, in not attacking them as you had been directed, and in making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat. I am," etc., etc.

To this Lee rejoined, in a note, misdated 28th June. "Sir, you cannot afford me greater pleasure than in giving me the opportunity of showing to America the sufficiency of her respective servants. I trust that temporary power of office, and the tinsel dignity attending it, will not be able, by all the mists they can raise, to offuscate the bright rays of truth. In the meantime, your Excellency can have no objection to my retiring from the army," etc.

Shortly after despatching this note, Lee addressed another to Washington. "I have reflected on both your situation and mine," writes he, "and beg leave to observe, that it will be for our mutual convenience that a court of inquiry should be immediately ordered: but I could wish that it might be a court-martial; for, if the affair is drawn into length, it may be difficult to collect the necessary evidences, and perhaps might bring on a paper war betwixt the adherents to both parties, which may occasion some disagreeable feuds on the continent; for all are not my friends, nor all your admirers. I must entreat, therefore, from your love of justice, that you will

immediately exhibit your charge, and that on the first halt I may be brought to a trial."

Washington in reply acknowledged the receipt of the two last notes, and added, "I have sent Colonel Scammel and the adjutant-general, to put you under arrest, who will deliver you a copy of the charges on which you will be tried."

The following were the charges:

1st. Disobedience of orders, in not attacking the enemy on the 28th June, agreeably to repeated instructions.

2d. Misbehavior before the enemy on the same day, by making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat.

3d. Disrespect to the commander-in-chief in two letters, dated the 1st of July, and the 28th of June.

A court-martial was accordingly formed on the 4th of July, at Brunswick, the first halting place. It was composed of one major-general, four brigadiers, and eight colonels, with Lord Stirling as president. It moved with the army, and convened subsequently at Paramus, Peekskill, and Northcastle, the trial lasting until the 12th of August. From the time it commenced, Washington never mentioned Lee's name when he could avoid it, and when he could not, he mentioned it without the smallest degree of acrimony or disrespect.

Lee, on the contrary, indulged his natural irritability of temper and sharpness of tongue. When put on his guard against any intemperate railings against Wash-

ington, as calculated to injure his cause, he spurned at the advice. "No attack, it seems, can be made on General Washington but it must recoil on the assailant. I never entertained the most distant wish or intention of attacking General Washington. I have ever honored and respected him as a man and a citizen; but if the circle which surrounds him chooses to erect him into an infallible divinity, I shall certainly prove a heretic; and if, great as he is, he can attempt wounding everything I ought to hold dear, he must thank his priests if his deityship gets scratched in the scuffle." *

In the repeated sessions of the court-martial and the long examinations which took place, many of the unfavorable impressions first received, concerning the conduct and motives of Lee, were softened. Some of the officers in his detachment, who had made accusations against him to the commander-in-chief previous to the trial, especially Generals Wayne and Scott, were found not to have understood all the circumstances of the case in which he was placed in his encounter with the rear division of Sir Henry Clinton, and that that division had been largely reinforced by troops from General Knyphausen.

Lee defended himself with ability. He contended that after the troops had commenced to fall back, in consequence of a retrograde movement of General Scott, he

* Letter to Joseph Reed. Sparks, *Biog. of Lee*, p. 174.

had intended to form them on the first advantageous ground he could find, and that none such presented itself until he reached the place where he met General Washington; on which very place he had intended to make battle.

He denied that in the whole course of the day he had uttered the word retreat. "But this retreat," said he, "though necessary, was brought about contrary to my orders, contrary to my intention; and, if anything can deduct from my credit, it is, that I did not *order* a retreat which was so necessary." *

Judge Marshall observes of the variety of reasons given by Lee, in justification of his retreat, "if they do not absolutely establish its propriety, they give it so questionable a form, as to render it probable that a public examination never would have taken place, could his proud spirit have stooped to offer explanation instead of outrage to the commander-in-chief."

The result of the prolonged and tedious investigation was that he was found guilty of all the charges exhibited against him; the second charge, however, was softened by omitting the word *shameful*, and convicting him of making an "unnecessary and in some instances a disorderly retreat." He was sentenced to be suspended from all command for one year: the sentence to be approved or set aside by Congress.

* Letter to Dr. Rush. Sparks, *Biog. of Lee.*

We must again anticipate dates, to dispose briefly of the career of General Lee, who is not connected with subsequent events of the Revolution. Congress were more than three months in coming to a decision on the proceedings of the court-martial. As the House always sat with closed doors, the debates on the subject are unknown, but are said to have been warm. Lee urged for speedy action, and regretted that the people at large could not be admitted to form an audience, when the discussion was entered into of the justice or iniquity, wisdom or absurdity of the sentence that had been passed upon him. At length, on the 5th of December, the sentence was approved in a very thin session of Congress, fifteen members voting in the affirmative and seven in the negative.

From that time Lee was unmeasured in his abuse of Washington, and his reprobation of the court-martial, which he termed a "court of inquisition." He published a long article in the newspapers relative to the trial and to the affair at Monmouth, calculated to injure Washington. "I have neither the leisure nor inclination," observes the latter, "to enter the lists with him in a newspaper; and so far as his production points to personality, I can and do from my inmost soul despise it. . . . . It became a part of General Lee's plan, from the moment of his arrest, though it was an event solicited by himself, to have the world believe that he was a persecuted man, and party was at the bottom of it.

But however convenient it may have been for his purposes to establish this belief, I defy him, or his most zealous partisans, to adduce a single instance in proof of it, unless bringing him to trial, at his own request, be considered in this light. I can do more; I will defy any person, out of my own family, to say, that I have ever mentioned his name, if it was to be avoided; and when not, that I have not studiously declined expressing any sentiment of him or his behavior. How far this conduct accords with his, let his own breast decide. . . . . As I never entertained any jealousy of him, so neither did I ever do more than common civility and proper respect to his rank required, to conciliate his good opinion. His temper and plans were too versatile and violent to attract my admiration: and, that I have escaped the venom of his tongue and pen so long, is more to be wondered at than applauded; as it is a favor of which no officer, under whose immediate command he ever served, has had the happiness, if happiness can be thus denominated, of boasting." *

Lee's aggressive tongue at length involved him in a quarrel with Colonel Laurens, one of Washington's aides, a high-spirited young gentleman, who felt himself bound to vindicate the honor of his chief. A duel took place, and Lee was wounded in the side.

Towards spring he retired to his estate in Berkley

* Washington to Reed. Sparks, vol. vi. p. 133.

County in Virginia, "to learn to hoe tobacco, which," observes he with a sarcastic innuendo at Washington, "is the best school to form a consummate *General.* This is a discovery I have lately made."

He had led a kind of hermit life on his estate; dogs and horses were his favorite companions. His house is described as being a mere shell, destitute of comforts and conveniences. For want of partitions the different parts were designated by lines chalked on the floor. In one corner was his bed; in another were his books; his saddles and harness in a third; a fourth served as a kitchen.

"Sir," said he to the visitor, "it is the most convenient and economical establishment in the world. The lines of chalk which you see on the floor, mark the divisions of the apartments, and I can sit in any corner and overlook the whole without moving from my chair."

In this retirement he solaced his mortification and resentment by exercising his caustic pen in "Queries Political and Military," intended to disparage the merits and conduct of Washington, and which were published in a Maryland newspaper. His attempts, it is needless to say, were fallacious, and only recoiled on his own head.

The term of his suspension had expired, when a rumor reached him that Congress intended to take away his commission. He was in bodily pain at the time; his horses were at the door for an excursion of business; the intelligence "ruffled his temper beyond all bounds." In his

hurry and heat, without attempting to ascertain the truth of the report, he scrawled the following note to the President of Congress: "Sir, I understand that it is in contemplation of Congress, on the principle of economy, to strike me out of their service. Congress must know very little of me, if they suppose that I would accept of their money, since the confirmation of the wicked and infamous sentence which was passed upon me. I am, sir," etc.

This insolent note occasioned his prompt dismissal from the service. He did not complain of it; but in a subsequent and respectful letter to the president, explained the mistaken information which had produced his note, and the state of body and mind in which it was written. "But, sir," added he, "I must entreat, in the acknowledging of the impropriety and indecorum of my conduct in this affair, it may not be supposed that I mean to court a restoration to the rank I held; so far from it, that I do assure you, had not the incident fallen out, I should have requested Congress to accept my resignation, as, for obvious reasons, whilst the army is continued in its present circumstances, I could not serve with safety and dignity," etc.

Though bitter in his enmities, Lee had his friendships, and was warm and constant in them as far as his capricious humors would allow. There was nothing crafty or mean in his character, nor do we think he ever engaged in the low intrigues of the cabal; but he was a

disappointed and embittered man, and the gall of bitterness overflowed his generous qualities. In such a discordant state of feeling, he was not a man for the sweet solitude of the country. He became weary of his Virginia estate; though in one of the most fertile regions of the Shenandoah Valley. His farm was mismanaged; his agents were unfaithful; he entered into negotiations to dispose of his property, in the course of which he visited Philadelphia. On arriving there, he was taken with chills, followed by a fever, which went on increasing in violence, and terminated fatally. A soldier even unto the end, warlike scenes mingled with the delirium of his malady. In his dying moments he fancied himself on the field of battle. The last words he was heard to utter were, "Stand by me, my brave grenadiers!"

He left a will and testament strongly marked by his peculiarities. There are bequests to intimates of horses, weapons, and sums to purchase rings of affection; ample and generous provisions for domestics, one of whom he styles his "old and faithful servant, or rather, humble friend." His landed estate in Berkley was to be divided into three equal parts, two of them between two of his former aides-de-camp, and the other third between two gentlemen to whom he felt under obligations. All his residuary property to go to his sister Sidney Lee and her heirs.

Eccentric to the last, one clause of his will regards his sepulture: "I desire most earnestly that I may not be

buried in any church or churchyard, or within a mile of any Presbyterian or Anabaptist meeting-house; for, since I have resided in this country, I have kept so much bad company while living, that I do not choose to continue it when dead."

This part of his will was not complied with. He was buried with military honors in the cemetery of Christ church; and his funeral was attended by the highest civic and military characters, and a large concourse of citizens.

The magnanimity exhibited by Washington in regard to Lee while living, continued after his death. He never spoke of him with asperity, but did justice to his merits, acknowledging that "he possessed many great qualities."

In after years, there was a proposition to publish the manuscripts of General Lee, and Washington was consulted in the matter, as there might be hostile articles among them which he might wish to have omitted. "I can have no request to make concerning the work," writes he in reply. "I never had a difference with that gentleman but on public grounds; and my conduct towards him on this occasion was such, only, as I felt myself indispensably bound to adopt in discharge of the public trust reposed in me. If this produced in him unfavorable sentiments of me, I can never consider the conduct I pursued, with respect to him, either wrong or improper, however I may regret that it may have been differently viewed by him, and that it excited his

anger and animadversions. Should there appear in General Lee's writings anything injurious or unfriendly to me, the impartial and dispassionate world must decide how far I deserved it from the general tenor of my conduct."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ARRIVAL OF A FRENCH FLEET.—CORRESPONDENCE OF WASHINGTON AND THE COUNT D'ESTAING.—PLANS OF THE COUNT.—PERTURBATION AT NEW YORK.—EXCITEMENT IN THE FRENCH FLEET.—EXPEDITION AGAINST RHODE ISLAND.—OPERATIONS BY SEA AND LAND.—FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION.—IRRITATION BETWEEN THE ALLIED FORCES.—CONSIDERATE LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO THE COUNT D'ESTAING.

WHILE encamped at Paramus, Washington, in the night of the 13th of July, received a letter from Congress informing him of the arrival of a French fleet on the coast; instructing him to concert measures with the commander, the Count D'Estaing, for offensive operations by sea and land, and empowering him to call on the States from New Hampshire to New Jersey inclusive, to aid with their militia.

The fleet in question was composed of twelve ships of the line and six frigates, with a land force of four thousand men. On board of it came Mons. Gerard, minister from France to the United States, and the Hon. Silas Deane, one of the American ministers who had effected the late treaty of alliance. The fleet had sailed from Toulon on the 13th of April. After struggling against adverse winds for eighty-seven or eighty-eight days, it

had made its appearance off the northern extremity of the Virginia coast, and anchored at the mouth of the Delaware, on the eighth of July. Thence the count despatched a letter to Washington, dated at sea. "I have the honor of imparting to your Excellency," writes he, "the arrival of the king's fleet, charged by His Majesty with the glorious task of giving his allies, the United States of America, the most striking proofs of his affection. Nothing will be wanting to my happiness, if I can succeed in it. It is augmented by the consideration of concerting my operations with a general such as your Excellency. The talents and great actions of General Washington have insured him, in the eyes of all Europe, the truly sublime title of Deliverer of America," etc.

The count was unfortunate in the length of his voyage. Had he arrived in ordinary time, he might have entrapped Lord Howe's squadron in the river; coöperated with Washington in investing the British army by sea and land, and, by cutting off its retreat to New York, compelled it to surrender.

Finding the enemy had evacuated both city and river, the count sent up the French minister and Mr. Deane to Philadelphia in a frigate, and then, putting to sea, continued along the coast. A little earlier, and he might have intercepted the squadron of Lord Howe on its way to New York. It had had but a very few days the advantage of him, and when he arrived with his fleet in the road

outside of Sandy Hook, he descried the British ships quietly anchored inside of it.

A frank and cordial correspondence took place forthwith between the count and Washington, and a plan of action was concerted between them by the intervention of confidential officers; Washington's aides-de-camp, Laurens and Hamilton, boarding the fleet while off the Hook, and Major Chouin, a French officer of merit, repairing to the American head-quarters.

The first idea of the count was to enter at Sandy Hook, and capture or destroy the British fleet composed of six ships of the line, four fifty-gun ships, and a number of frigates and smaller vessels; should be succeed in this, which his greatly superior force rendered probable, he was to proceed against the city, with the coöperation of the American forces. To be at hand for such purpose, Washington crossed the Hudson, with his army, at King's Ferry, and encamped at White Plains about the 20th of July.

In the meantime New York was once more in a violent perturbation. "British seamen," says a writer of the times, "endured the mortification, for the first time, of seeing a British fleet blocked up and insulted in their own harbor, and the French flag flying triumphant without. And this was still more embittered and aggravated, by beholding every day vessels under English colors captured under their very eyes by the enemy."* The army

* *Brit. Ann. Register*, for 1778, p. 229.

responded to their feelings; many royalists of the city, too, hastened to offer their services as volunteers; there was, in short, a prodigious stir in every department, military and naval.

On the other hand, the French officers and crews were in the highest state of excitement and exultation. The long low point of Sandy Hook was all that intervened between them and a splendid triumph, and they anticipated the glory of "delivering America from the English colors which they saw waving on the other side of a simple barrier of sand, upon so great a crowd of masts."*

Several experienced American pilots and masters of vessels, however, who had accompanied Colonels Laurens and Hamilton on board of the fleet, declared that there was not sufficient depth of water on the bar to admit the safe passage of the largest ships, one of which carried 80 and another 90 guns: the attempt, therefore, was reluctantly abandoned; and the ships anchored about four miles off, near Shrewsbury on the Jersey coast, taking in provisions and water.

The enterprise which the American and French commanders deemed next worthy of a combined operation, was the recapture of Rhode Island proper, that is to say, the island which gives its name to the State, and which the enemy had made one of their military depots and strongholds. In anticipation of such an enterprise

* Letter of the Count.

Washington on the 17th of July wrote to General Sullivan, who commanded at Providence, ordering him to make the necessary preparations for a descent from the mainland upon the island, and authorizing him to call in reinforcements of New England militia. He subsequently sent to his aid the Marquis Lafayette with two brigades (Varnum's and Glover's). Quartermaster-general Greene also was detached for the service, being a native of the island, well acquainted with its localities, and having great influence among its inhabitants. Sullivan was instructed to form his whole force, Continental, State and militia, into two equal divisions, one to be commanded by Greene, the other by Lafayette.

On the 22d of July, the French fleet, having finished taking in its supplies, appeared again in full force off the bar at Sandy Hook. The British, who supposed they had only been waiting on the Shrewsbury coast for the high tides of the latter part of July, now prepared for a desperate conflict; and, indeed, had the French fleet been enabled to enter, it is difficult to conceive a more terrible and destructive struggle than would have ensued between these gallant and deadly rivals, with their powerful armaments brought side to side, and cramped up in so confined a field of action.

D'Estaing, however, had already determined his course. After a few demonstrations off the harbor, he stood away to the eastward, and on the 29th arrived off Point Judith, coming to anchor within five miles of Newport.

Rhode Island (proper), the object of this expedition, is about sixteen miles long, running deep into the great Narraganset Bay. Seaconnet Channel separates it on the east from the mainland, and on the west the main channel passes between it and Conanicut Island. The town of Newport is situated near the south end of the island, facing the west, with Conanicut Island in front of it. It was protected by batteries and a small naval force. Here General Sir Robert Pigott, who commanded in the island, had his head-quarters. The force under him was about six thousand strong, variously posted about the island, some in works at the north end, but the greater part within strongly intrenched lines extending across the island, about three miles from the town. General Greene hastened from Providence on hearing of the arrival of the fleet of Count D'Estaing, and went on board of it at the anchorage to concert a plan of operations. Some questions of etiquette and precedence rose between them in settling the mode in which the attack was to be conducted. It was at length agreed that the fleet should force its way into the harbor at the same time that the Americans approached by land, and that the landing of the troops from the ships on the west side of the island should take place at the same time that the Americans should cross Seaconnet Channel, and land on the east side near the north end. This combined operation was to have been carried promptly into effect, but was postponed until the 10th of August, to give time for the rein-

forcements sent by Washington to arrive. The delay was fatal to the enterprise.

On the 8th, the Count D'Estaing entered the harbor and passed up the main channel, exchanging a cannonade with the batteries as he passed, and anchored a little above the town, between Goat and Conanicut Islands. The English, on his approach, burnt or scuttled three frigates and some smaller vessels, which would otherwise have been captured. General Sullivan, to be ready for the concerted attack, had moved down from Providence to the neighborhood of Howland's Ferry, on the east side of Seaconnet passage.

The British troops stationed opposite on the north end of the island, fearful of being cut off, evacuated their works in the night of the 8th, and drew into the lines at Newport.

Sullivan, seeing the works thus abandoned, could not resist the temptation to cross the channel in flat-bottomed boats on the morning of the 9th, and take possession of them.

This sudden movement, a day in advance of the concerted time, and without due notice given to the count, surprised and offended him, clashing with his notions of etiquette and punctilio. He, however, prepared to cooperate, and was ordering out his boats for the purpose, when, about two o'clock in the day, his attention was called to a great fleet of ships standing toward Newport. It was, in fact, the fleet of Lord Howe. That gallant

nobleman had heard of the danger of Newport, and being reinforced by four stout ships, part of a squadron coming out under Admiral Byron, had hastened to its relief; though still inferior in force to the French admiral. The delay of the concerted attack had enabled him to arrive in time. The wind set directly into the harbor. Had he entered promptly, the French would have been placed between two fires, from his ships and the batteries, and cramped up in a confined channel where their largest ships had no room to operate. His lordship, however, merely stood in near the land, communicated with General Pigott, and having informed himself exactly of the situation of the French fleet, came to anchor at Point Judith, some distance from the southwest entrance of the bay.

In the night the wind changed to the northeast. The count hastened to avail himself of the error of the British admiral. Favored by the wind, he stood out of the harbor at eight o'clock in the morning to give the enemy battle where he should have good sea room, previously sending word to General Sullivan, who had advanced the preceding afternoon to Quaker Hill, about ten miles north of Newport, that he would land his promised troops and marines, and coöperate with him on his return.

The French ships were severely cannonaded as they passed the batteries, but without material damage. Forming in order of battle, they bore down upon the fleet of Lord Howe, confidently anticipating a victory

from their superiority of force. The British ships slipt their cables at their approach, and likewise formed in line of battle; but his lordship avoided an encounter while the enemy had the weathergage. To gain this on the one part, and retain it on the other, the two fleets manœuvred throughout the day, standing to the southward, and gradually disappearing from the anxious eyes of the belligerent forces on Rhode Island.

The army of Sullivan, now left to itself before Newport, amounted to ten thousand men, having received the militia reinforcements. Lafayette advised the delay of hostile operations until the return of D'Estaing, but the American commander, piqued and chagrined at the departure of his allies, determined to commence the siege immediately, without waiting for his tardy aid. On the 12th, however, came on a tempest of wind and rain, which raged for two days and nights with unexampled violence. Tents were blown down; several soldiers and many horses perished, and a great part of the ammunition recently dealt out to the troops was destroyed. On the 14th, the weather cleared up and the sun shone brightly, but the army was worn down and dispirited. Had the British troops sallied forth at this juncture hale and fresh from comfortable quarters, it might have fared badly with their weather-beaten besiegers. The latter, however, being unmolested, had time to breathe and refit themselves. The day was passed in drying their clothes, cleaning their arms, and putting themselves in

order for action. By the next morning they were again on the alert. Expecting the prompt return of the French, they now took post on Honeyman's Hill, about two miles from the British lines, and began to construct batteries, form lines of communication, and make regular approaches. The British were equally active in strengthening their defenses. There was casual cannonading on each side, but nothing of consequence. Several days elapsed without the reappearance of the French. The situation of the besiegers was growing critical, when, on the evening of the 19th, they descried the expected fleet standing toward the harbor. All now was exultation in the camp. Should the French with their ships and troops attack the town by sea and land on the one side, while the Americans assailed it on the other, the surrender of the place was inevitable.

These sanguine anticipations, however, were short-lived. The French fleet was in a shattered and forlorn condition. After sailing from before Newport, on the 20th, it had manœuvred for two days with the British fleet, each unwilling to enter into action without having the weathergage. While thus manœuvring, the same furious storm which had raged on shore separated and dispersed them with fearful ravage. Some single encounters of scattered ships subsequently took place, but without definite result. All were too much tempest-tost and disabled to make good fight. Lord Howe with such of his ships as he could collect bore away to New York to refit,

and the French admiral was now before Newport, but in no plight or mood for fighting.

In a letter to General Sullivan, he informed him that, pursuant to the orders of his sovereign and the advice of his officers, he was bound for Boston, being instructed to repair to that port, should he meet with misfortune, or a superior British force appear upon the coast.

Dismayed at this intelligence, which threatened ruin and disgrace to the enterprise, Sullivan wrote a letter of remonstrance to the count, and General Greene and the Marquis Lafayette repaired with it on board of the admiral's ship, to enforce it by their personal exertions. They represented to the count the certainty of carrying the place in two days, by a combined attack; and the discouragement and reproach that would follow a failure on this their first attempt at coöperation; an attempt, too, for which the Americans had made such great and expensive preparations, and on which they had indulged such sanguine hopes. These and other considerations equally urgent had their weight with the count, and he was inclined to remain and pursue the enterprise, but was overruled by the principal officers of his fleet. The fact is, that he was properly a land officer, and they had been indignant at his having a nautical command over their heads. They were glad, therefore, of any opportunity to thwart and mortify him; and now insisted on his complying with his letter of instructions, and sailing for Boston. On Lafayette's taking leave, the count assured

him that he would only remain in Boston time enough to give his men repose after their long sufferings, and refit his ships; and trusted to leave the port again within three weeks after entering it, "to fight for the glory of the French name and the interests of America." *

The marquis and General Greene returned at midnight, and made a report of the ill success of their mission. Sullivan sent another letter on the following day, urging D'Estaing in any event to leave his land forces. All the general officers, excepting Lafayette, joined in signing and sending a protest against the departure of the fleet to Boston, as derogatory to the honor of France, contrary to the intention of his most Christian Majesty and the interest of his nation, destructive of the welfare of the United States, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations. The fleet was already under way when Colonel Laurens got on board of the admiral's ship with the letter and protest. The count was deeply offended by the tone of the protest, and the manner in which it was conveyed to him. He declared to Colonel Laurens that "this paper imposed on the commander of the king's squadron the painful but necessary law of profound silence." He continued his course to Boston.

At the sailing of the ships there was a feeling of exasperation throughout the camp. Sullivan gave vent to his vexation in a general order on the 24th, wherein he

* Letter of Lafayette to Washington. *Memoirs*, t. i. p. 194.

observed: "The general cannot help lamenting the sudden and unexpected departure of the French fleet, as he finds it has a tendency to discourage some who placed great dependence upon the assistance of it; though he can by no means suppose the army, or any part of it, endangered by this movement. He yet hopes the event will prove America able to procure that by her own arms which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining."

On cooler reflection he thought proper, in subsequent orders, to explain away the rash and unwarrantable imputation on French loyalty contained in the foregoing document, but a general feeling of irritation against the French continued to prevail in the army.

As had been foretold, the departure of the fleet was a death-blow to the enterprise. Between two and three thousand volunteers abandoned the camp in the course of four-and-twenty hours; others continued to go off; desertions occurred among the militia, and in a few days the number of besiegers did not exceed that of the besieged.

All thoughts of offensive operations were now at an end. The question was how best to extricate the army from its perilous position. The harbors of Rhode Island being now free, and open to the enemy, reinforcements might pour in from New York, and render the withdrawal of the troops disastrous, if not impossible. To prepare for rapid retreat, if necessary, all the heavy artillery that could be spared was sent off from the island. On the

28th it was determined, in a council of war, to fall back to the military works at the north end of the island, and fortify there, until it should be known whether the French fleet would soon return to their assistance, the Marquis Lafayette setting off with all speed to have an interview with the Count D'Estaing, and ascertain the fact.

General Sullivan broke up his camp, and commenced his retreat that very night, between nine and ten o'clock, the army retiring by two roads, the rear covered by parties of light troops, under Colonels Livingston and Laurens.

Their retreat was not discovered until daylight, when a pursuit was commenced. The covering parties behaved gallantly, making frequent stands, abandoning one eminence only to take post on another, and keeping up a retreating fire that checked the advance of the enemy. After a series of skirmishes they were pressed back to the fortified grounds on the north end of the island; but Sullivan had already taken post there, on Batt's Hill, the main body of his army being drawn up in order of battle, with strong works in their rear, and a redoubt in front of the right wing.

The British now took post on an advantageous height called Quaker Hill, a little more than a mile from the American front, whence they commenced a cannonade which was briskly returned. Skirmishing ensued until about ten o'clock, when two British sloops-of-war and

some small vessels having gained a favorable position, the enemy's troops, under cover of their fire, advanced in force to turn the right flank of the American army, and capture the redoubt which protected it. This was bravely defended by General Greene: a sharp action ensued, which had nearly become a general one; between two and three hundred men were killed on each side; the British at length drew back to their artillery and works on Quaker Hill, and a mutual cannonade was resumed and kept up until night.

On the following day (29th) the enemy continued his distant firing, but waited for reinforcements before coming to close quarters. In the meantime, General Sullivan had received intelligence that Lord Howe had again put to sea with the design, no doubt, to attempt the relief of Newport; and then followed another report that a fleet with troops was actually off Block Island, and must arrive almost immediately in the harbor.

Under these circumstances it was determined to abandon Rhode Island. To do so with safety, however, required the utmost caution, as the hostile sentries were within four hundred yards of each other, and any suspicious movements would be easily discovered and reported to the British commander. The position on Batt's Hill favored a deception. Tents were brought forward and pitched in sight of the enemy, and a great part of the troops employed throughout the day in throwing up works, as if the post was to be resolutely maintained; at

the same time, the heavy baggage and stores were quietly conveyed away in the rear of the hill, and ferried across the bay. As soon as it was dark the tents were struck, fires were lighted at various points, the troops withdrawn, and in a few hours the whole were transported across the channel to the mainland. In the height of the transit, Lafayette arrived. He had ridden from the island to Boston, a distance of nearly seventy miles, in seven hours, and had conferred with the French admiral.

D'Estaing had convinced him of the inadequacy of his naval force, but had made a spirited offer of leading his troops by land to coöperate with the Americans. Eager to be in time for any engagement that might take place, Lafayette had spurred back still more speedily than he went, but was disappointed and mortified at finding all the fighting over. He arrived in time, however, to bring off the pickets and covering parties, amounting to a thousand men, which he did in such excellent order, that not a man was left behind, nor the smallest article lost.

The whole army had crossed by two o'clock in the morning unperceived by the enemy, and had reason to congratulate themselves on the course they had taken, and the quickness of their movements; for the very next day Sir Henry Clinton arrived at Newport in a light squadron, with a reinforcement of four thousand men, a naval and land force that might effectually have cut off Sullivan's retreat had he lingered on the island.

Sir Henry, finding that he had arrived a day too late,

returned to New York, but first detached Major-general Sir Charles Grey with the troops, on a ravaging expedition to the eastward; chiefly against ports which were the haunts of privateers. This was the same general that had surprised Wayne in the preceding year, and effected such slaughter among his men with the bayonet. He appears to have been fitted for rough and merciless warfare. In the course of his present expedition he destroyed more than seventy vessels in Acushnet River, some of them privateers with their prizes, others peaceful merchant ships. New Bedford and Fair Haven having been made military and naval depots, were laid waste, wharves demolished, rope-walks, store-houses and mills, with several private dwellings, wrapped in flames. Similar destruction was effected at the Island of Martha's Vineyard, a resort of privateers; where the inhabitants were disarmed, and a heavy contribution levied upon them in sheep and cattle. Having thus ravaged the coasts of New England, the squadron returned laden with inglorious spoil to New York.

Lord Howe, also, who had sailed for Boston, in the hope of intercepting the Count D'Estaing, and had reached there on the 30th of August, found the French fleet safely sheltered in Nantasket Road, and protected by American batteries erected on commanding points. He also returned to New York, and shortly afterward, availing himself of a permission granted him some time before by government, resigned the command of the

fleet to Admiral Gambier, to hold it until the arrival of Admiral Byron. His lordship then returned to England, having rendered important services by his operations along the American coast and on the waters of the Delaware, and presenting a strong contrast, in his incessant activity, to the easy indolence and self-indulgence of his brother.

The failure of the combined enterprise against Rhode Island was a cause of universal chagrin and disappointment, but to none more so than to Washington, as is evident from the following passage of a letter to his brother, John Augustine :—

"An unfortunate storm, and some measures taken in consequence of it by the French Admiral, blasted in one moment the fairest hopes that ever were conceived ; and, from a moral certainty of success, rendered it a matter of rejoicing to get our own troops safe off the island. If the garrison of that place, consisting of nearly six thousand men, had been captured, as there was, in appearance at least, a hundred to one in favor of it, it would have given the finishing blow to British pretensions of sovereignty over this country ; and would, I am persuaded, have hastened the departure of the troops in New York, as fast as their canvas wings would carry them away."

But what gave Washington the greatest solicitude, was the effect of this disappointment upon the public mind. The failure of the enterprise was generally attributed to

the departure of the French fleet from Newport, and there was at one time such popular exasperation, that it was feared the means of repairing the French ships at Boston would be withheld. Count D'Estaing, and the other French officers, on their part, were irritated by the protests of the American officers, and the expressions in Sullivan's general order derogatory to French loyalty. The count addressed a letter to Congress, explaining and vindicating his conduct subsequent to his arrival on the coast.

Washington regarded this mutual irritation which had so suddenly sprung up between the army and the fleet, with the most poignant anxiety. He wrote to Sullivan and Greene on the subject, urging them to suppress the feuds and jealousies which had already arisen, to conceal as much as possible from the soldiery and public, the misunderstandings which had occurred between the officers of the two nations; to discountenance all illiberal or unfriendly observations on the part of the army, and to cultivate the utmost harmony and good-will.

Congress, also, endeavored to suppress the protest of the officers of Sullivan's army which had given so much offense; and, in a public resolution, expressed their perfect approbation of the conduct of the count, and their sense of his zeal and attachment.

Nothing perhaps tended more to soothe his wounded sensibilities, than a letter from Washington, couched in the most delicate and considerate language. "If the

deepest regret, that the best concerted enterprise and bravest exertions should have been rendered fruitless by a disaster, which human prudence was incapable of foreseeing or preventing, can alleviate disappointment, you may be assured that the whole continent sympathizes with you. It will be a consolation for you to reflect, that the thinking part of mankind do not form their judgment from events; and that their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions which deserve success, and those which have been crowned with it. It is in the trying circumstances to which your Excellency has been exposed, that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre, and that a general's character is better known than in the hour of victory. It was yours, by every title which can give it; and the adverse element, which robbed you of your prize, can never deprive you of the glory due to you."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

INDIAN WARFARE.—DESOLATION OF THE VALLEY OF WYOMING.—MOVEMENTS IN NEW YORK.—COUNTER-MOVEMENTS OF WASHINGTON.—FORAGING PARTIES OF THE ENEMY.—BAYLOR'S DRAGOONS MASSACRED AT OLD TAPPAN.—BRITISH EXPEDITION AGAINST LITTLE EGG HARBOR.—MASSACRE OF PULASKI'S INFANTRY.—RETALIATION OF DONOP'S RANGERS.—ARRIVAL OF ADMIRAL BYRON.—ENDEAVORS TO ENTRAP D'ESTAING, BUT IS DISAPPOINTED.—EXPEDITION AGAINST ST. LUCIA.—EXPEDITION AGAINST GEORGIA.—CAPTURE OF SAVANNAH.—GEORGIA SUBDUED.—GENERAL LINCOLN SENT TO COMMAND IN THE SOUTH.

HILE hostilities were carried on in the customary form along the Atlantic borders, Indian warfare, with all its atrocity, was going on in the interior. The British post at Niagara was its cradle. It was the common rallying-place of tories, refugees, savage warriors, and other desperadoes of the frontiers. Hither Brant, the noted Indian chief, had retired after the repulse of St. Leger at Fort Schuyler, to plan further mischief; and here was concerted the memorable incursion into the Valley of Wyoming, suggested by tory refugees, who had until recently inhabited it.

The Valley of Wyoming is a beautiful region lying along the Susquehanna. Peaceful as was its aspect, it had been the scene of sanguinary feuds prior to the Rev-

olution, between the people of Pennsylvania and Connecticut, who both laid claim to it. Seven rural forts or block-houses, situated on various parts of the valley, had been strongholds during these territorial contests, and remained as places of refuge for women and children in times of Indian ravage.

The expedition now set on foot against it, in June, was composed of Butler's rangers, Johnson's Royal Greens, and Brant, with his Indian braves. Their united force, about eleven hundred strong, was conducted by Colonel John Butler, renowned in Indian warfare. Passing down the Chemung and Susquehanna in canoes, they landed at a place called Three Islands, struck through the wilderness to a gap or "notch" of the mountains, by which they entered the Valley of Wyoming. Butler made his head-quarters at one of the strongholds already mentioned, called Wintermoot's Fort, from a tory family of the same name. Hence he sent out his marauding parties to plunder and lay waste the country.

Rumors of this intended invasion had reached the valley some time before the appearance of the enemy, and had spread great consternation. Most of the sturdy yeomanry were absent in the army. A company of sixty men, enlisted under an act of Congress, and hastily and imperfectly organized, yet styling themselves regulars, took post at one of the strongholds called Forty Fort; where they were joined by about three hundred of the most efficient of the yeomanry, armed and equipped in

rude rustic style. In this emergency old men and boys volunteered to meet the common danger, posting themselves in the smaller forts in which women and children had taken refuge. Colonel Zebulon Butler, an officer of the Continental Army, took the general command. Several officers arrived from the army, having obtained leave to repair home for the protection of their families. They brought word that a reinforcement, sent by Washington, was on its way.

In the meantime the marauding parties sent out by Butler and Brant were spreading desolation through the valley; farm-houses were wrapped in flames; husbandmen were murdered while at work in the fields; all who had not taken refuge in the fort were threatened with destruction. What was to be done? Wait for the arrival of the promised reinforcement, or attempt to check the ravage? The latter was rashly determined on.

Leaving the women and children in Forty Fort, Colonel Zebulon Butler with his men sallied forth on the 3d of July, and made a rapid move upon Wintermoot Fort, hoping to come upon it by surprise. They found the enemy drawn up in front of it, in a line extending from the river to a marsh; Colonel John Butler and his rangers, with Johnson's Royal Greens, on the left; Indians and tories on the right.

The Americans formed a line of the same extent; the regulars under Colonel Butler on the right flank, resting on the river, the militia under Colonel Denison on the

left wing, on the marsh. A sharp fire was opened from right to left; after a few volleys the enemy in front of Colonel Butler began to give way. The Indians, however, throwing themselves into the marsh, turned the left flank of the Americans, and attacked the militia in the rear. Denison, finding himself exposed to a cross fire, sought to change his position, and gave the word to fall back. It was mistaken for an order to retreat. In an instant the left wing turned and fled; all attempts to rally it were vain; the panic extended to the right wing. The savages, throwing down their rifles, rushed on with tomahawk and scalping-knife, and a horrible massacre ensued. Some of the Americans escaped to Forty Fort, some swam the river; others broke their way across the swamp, and climbed the mountain: some few were taken prisoners; but the greater number were slaughtered.

The desolation of the valley was now completed; fields were laid waste, houses burnt, and their inhabitants murdered. According to the British accounts, upwards of four hundred of the yeomanry of Wyoming were slain, but the women and children were spared, "and desired to retire to their rebel friends." *

Upwards of five thousand persons, says the same account, fled in the utmost distress and consternation, seeking refuge in the settlements on the Lehigh and the Delaware. After completing this horrible work of devas-

* *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1778, p. 545.

tation, the enemy retired before the arrival of the troops detached by Washington.

We might have swelled our narrative of this affair by many individual acts of atrocity committed by royalists on their old friends and neighbors, and even their near relatives; but we forbear to darken our page by such stigmas on human nature. Suffice it to say, it was one of the most atrocious outrages perpetrated throughout the war; and, as usual, the tories concerned in it were the most vindictive and merciless of the savage crew. Of the measures taken in consequence we shall speak hereafter.

For a great part of the summer, Washington had remained encamped at White Plains, watching the movements of the enemy at New York. Early in September he observed a great stir of preparation; cannon and military stores were embarked, and a fleet of one hundred and forty transports were ready to make sail. What was their destination? Washington deplored the facility possessed by the enemy of transporting their troops from point to point by sea. "Their rapid movements," said he, "enable them to give us solicitude for the safety of remote points, to succor which we should have to make ruinous marches, and after all, perhaps, find ourselves the dupes of a feint."

There were but two capital objects which they could have in view, beside the defeat and dispersion of his army. One was to get possession of the forts and passes of the Highlands; the other, by a junction of their land

and naval forces, to attempt the destruction of the French fleet at Boston, and regain possession of that town These points were so far asunder, that it was difficult to protect the one, without leaving the other exposed. To do the best that the nature of the case would admit, Washington strengthened the works and reinforced the garrison in the Highlands, stationed Putnam with two brigades in the neighborhood of West Point. General Gates was sent with three brigades to Danbury in Connecticut, where he was joined by two brigades under General McDougall, while Washington moved his camp to a rear position at Fredericksburg on the borders of Connecticut, and about thirty miles from West Point, so as to be ready for a movement to the eastward or a speedy junction for the defense of the Hudson. To facilitate an eastern movement, he took measures to have all the roads leading to Boston repaired.

Scarce had Washington moved from White Plains, when Sir Henry Clinton threw a detachment of five thousand men under Lord Cornwallis into the Jerseys, between the Hackensack and Hudson Rivers, and another of three thousand under Knyphausen into Westchester County, between the Hudson and the Bronx. These detachments held communication with each other, and by the aid of flat-bottomed boats could unite their forces, in twenty-four hours, on either side of the Hudson.

Washington considered these mere foraging expeditions, though on a large scale, and detached troops into

the Jerseys, to coöperate with the militia in checking them; but, as something more might be intended, he ordered General Putnam to cross the river to West Point, for its immediate security: while he himself moved with a division of his army to Fishkill.

Wayne, who was with the detachment in the Jerseys, took post with a body of militia and a regiment of light horse in front of the division of Lord Cornwallis. The militia were quartered at the village of New Tappan; but Lieutenant-colonel Baylor, who commanded the light horse, chose to encamp apart, to be free, as is supposed, from the control of Wayne. He took up his quarters, therefore, in Old Tappan, where his men lay very negligently and unguardedly in barns. Cornwallis had intelligence of their exposed situation, and laid a plan to cut off the whole detachment. A body of troops from Knyphausen's division was to cross the Hudson in the night, and come by surprise upon the militia in New Tappan: at the same time, Major-general Grey, of marauding renown, was to advance on the left, and attack Baylor and his dragoons in their careless quarters in Old Tappan.

Fortunately Knyphausen's troops, led by Lieutenant-colonel Campbell, were slow in crossing the river, and the militia were apprised by deserters of their danger in time to escape. Not so with Baylor's party. General Grey having cut off a sergeant's patrol, advanced in silence, and surrounded with his troops three barns in which the dragoons were sleeping. We have seen, in

his surprise of Wayne's detachment in the preceding year, how stealthy and effective he was in the work of destruction. To prevent noise he had caused his men to draw the charges and take the flints from their guns, and fix their bayonets. The bayonet was his favorite weapon. With this his men rushed forward, and, deaf for a time to all cries for mercy, made a savage slaughter of naked and defenseless men. Eleven were killed on the spot, and twenty-five mangled, with repeated thrusts, some receiving ten, twelve, and even sixteen wounds. Among the wounded were Colonel Baylor and Major Clough, the last of whom soon died. About forty were taken prisoners, mostly through the humane interposition of one of Grey's captains, whose feelings revolted at the orders of his sanguinary commander.

This whole movement of troops, on both sides of the Hudson, was designed to cover an expedition against Little Egg Harbor, on the east coast of New Jersey, a noted rendezvous of American privateers. It was conducted in much the same spirit with that of General Grey to the eastward. Three hundred regular troops, and a body of royalist volunteers from the Jerseys, headed by Captain Patrick Ferguson, embarked at New York on board galleys and transports, and made for Little Egg Harbor under convoy of vessels of war. They were long at sea. The country heard of their coming; four privateers put to sea and escaped; others took refuge up the river. The wind prevented the transports from entering

The troops embarked in row galleys and small craft, and pushed twenty miles up the river to the village of Chestnut Neck. Here were batteries, without guns, prize ships which had been hastily scuttled, and store-houses for the reception of prize goods. The batteries and store-houses were demolished, the prize ships burnt, saltworks destroyed and private dwellings sacked and laid in ashes; all, it was pretended, being the property of persons concerned in privateering, or "whose activity in the cause of America and unrelenting persecution of the loyalists, marked them out as the proper objects of vengeance." As those persons were pointed out by the tory volunteers of New Jersey who accompanied the expedition, we may suppose how far private pique and neighborly feud entered into these proscriptions.

The vessels which brought this detachment being wind-bound for several days, Captain Ferguson had time for another enterprise. Among the forces detached by Washington into the Jerseys to check these ravages, was the Count Pulaski's legionary corps, composed of three companies of foot, and a troop of horse, officered principally by foreigners. A deserter from the corps brought word to the British commander that the legion was cantoned about twelve miles up the river; the infantry in three houses by themselves; Count Pulaski with the cavalry at some distance apart.

Informed of these circumstances, Captain Ferguson embarked in boats with two hundred and fifty men,

ascended the river in the night, landed at four in the morning, and surrounded the houses in which the infantry were sleeping. "It being a night attack," says the captain in his official report, "little quarter of course could be given, *so there were only five prisoners.*" It was indeed a massacre similar to those of the bayonet-loving General Grey. Fifty of the infantry were butchered on the spot; among whom were two of the foreign officers, the Baron de Bose and Lieutenant de la Broderie.

The clattering of hoofs gave note of the approach of Pulaski and his horse, whereupon the British made a rapid retreat to their boats and pulled down the river, and thus ended the marauding expedition of Captain Ferguson, worthy of the times of the buccaneers. He attempted afterwards to excuse his wanton butchery of unarmed men, by alleging that the deserter from Pulaski's legion told him the count, in his general orders, forbade all granting of quarters; information which proved to be false, and which, had he been a gentleman of honorable spirit, he never would have believed, especially on the word of a deserter.

The detachment on the east side of the Hudson likewise made a predatory and disgraceful foray from their lines at King's Bridge, towards the American encampment at White Plains, plundering the inhabitants without discrimination, not only of their provisions and forage, but of the very clothes on their backs. None were more

efficient in this ravage than a party of about one hundred of Captain Donop's Hessian yagers, and they were in full maraud between Tarrytown and Dobb's Ferry, when a detachment of infantry under Colonel Richard Butler, and of cavalry under Major Henry Lee, came upon them by surprise, killed ten of them on the spot, captured a lieutenant and eighteen privates, and would have taken or destroyed the whole, had not the extreme roughness of the country impeded the action of the cavalry, and enabled the yagers to escape by scrambling up hillsides or plunging into ravines. This occurred but three days after the massacre of Colonel Baylor's party, on the opposite side of the Hudson.

The British detachments having accomplished the main objects of their movements, returned to New York, leaving those parts of the country they had harassed still more determined in their hostility, having achieved nothing but what is least honorable and most detestable in warfare. We need no better comment on these measures than one furnished by a British writer of the day. "Upon the whole," observes he, "even if the treaty between France and America had not rendered all hope of success from the present conciliatory system hopeless, these predatory and irritating expeditions would have appeared peculiarly ill-timed and unlucky. Though strongly and warmly recommended by many here as the most effectual mode of war, we scarcely remember an instance in which they have not been more mischievous than use-

ful to the grand objects of either reducing or reconciling the provinces." *

We may add here that General Grey, who had most signalized himself in these sanguinary exploits, and who from his stealthy precaution to insure the use of the bayonet, had acquired the surname of "No Flint," was rewarded for a long career of military services by being raised to the peerage as Lord Grey of Howick, ultimately Earl Grey. He was father of the celebrated prime minister of that name.

About the middle of September Admiral Byron arrived at New York with the residue of the scattered armament, which had sailed from England in June to counteract the designs of the Count D'Estaing. Finding that the count was still repairing his shattered fleet in the harbor of Boston, he put to sea again as soon as his ships were refitted, and set sail for that port to entrap him. Success seemed likely to crown his schemes: he arrived off Boston on the 1st of November: his rival was still in port. Scarce had the admiral entered the bay, however, when another violent storm drove him out to sea, disabled his ships, and compelled him to put into Rhode Island to refit. Meanwhile the count having his ships in good order, and finding the coast clear, put to sea, and made the best of his way for the West Indies. Previous to his departure he issued a proclamation dated the

* *Ann. Register*, 1778, p. 215.

28th of October, addressed to the French inhabitants of Canada, inviting them to resume allegiance to their former sovereign. This was a measure in which he was not authorized by instructions from his government, and which was calculated to awaken a jealousy in the American mind as to the ultimate views of France in taking a part in this contest. It added to the chagrin occasioned by the failure of the expedition against Rhode Island, and the complete abandonment by the French of the coasts of the United States.

The force at New York, which had been an object of watchful solicitude, was gradually dispersed in different directions. Immediately after the departure of Admiral Byron for Boston, another naval expedition had been set on foot by Sir Henry Clinton. All being ready, a fleet of transports with five thousand men, under General Grant, convoyed by Commodore Hotham with a squadron of six ships of war, set sail on the third of November, with the secret design of an attack on St. Lucia.

Towards the end of the same month, another body of troops, under Lieutenant-colonel Campbell, sailed for Georgia in the squadron of Commodore Hyde Parker, the British cabinet having determined to carry the war into the Southern States. At the same time General Prevost, who commanded in Florida, was ordered by Sir Henry Clinton to march to the banks of the Savannah River, and attack Georgia in flank, while the expedition

under Campbell should attack it in front on the seaboard. We will briefly note the issue of these enterprises, so far beyond Washington's control.

The squadron of Commodore Hyde Parker anchored in the Savannah River towards the end of December. An American force of about six hundred regulars, and a few militia, under General Robert Howe, were encamped near the town, being the remnant of an army with which that officer had invaded Florida in the preceding summer, but had been obliged to evacuate it by a mortal malady which desolated his camp.

Lieutenant-colonel Campbell landed his troops on the 29th of December, about three miles below the town. The whole country bordering the river is a deep morass, cut up by creeks, and only to be traversed by causeways. Over one of these, six hundred yards in length, with a ditch on each side, Colonel Campbell advanced, putting to flight a small party stationed to guard it. General Howe had posted his little army on the main road with the river on his left and a morass in front. A negro gave Campbell information of a path leading through the morass, by which troops might get unobserved to the rear of the Americans. Sir James Baird was detached with the light infantry by this path, while Colonel Campbell advanced in front. The Americans, thus suddenly attacked in front and rear, were completely routed; upwards of one hundred were either killed on the spot, or perished in the morass; thirty-eight officers and four

hundred and fifteen privates were taken prisoners, and the rest retreated up the Savannah River and crossed into South Carolina. Savannah, the capital of Georgia, was taken possession of by the victors, with cannon, military stores, and provisions; their loss was only seven killed and nineteen wounded.

Colonel Campbell conducted himself with great moderation; protecting the persons and property of the inhabitants, and proclaiming security and favor to all that should return to their allegiance. Numbers in consequence flocked to the British standard; the lower part of Georgia was considered as subdued, and posts were established by the British to maintain possession.

While Colonel Campbell had thus invaded Georgia in front, General Prevost, who commanded the British forces in Florida, had received orders from Sir Henry Clinton to take it in flank. He accordingly traversed deserts to its southern frontier, took Sunbury, the only remaining fort of importance, and marched to Savannah, where he assumed the general command, detaching Colonel Campbell against Augusta. By the middle of January (1779) all Georgia was reduced to submission.

A more experienced American general than Howe had by this time arrived to take command of the Southern Department—Major-general Lincoln, who had gained such reputation in the campaign against Burgoyne, and

whose appointment to this station had been solicited by the delegates from South Carolina and Georgia. He had received his orders from Washington in the beginning of October. Of his operations at the South we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

WINTER CANTONMENTS OF THE AMERICAN ARMY.—WASHINGTON AT MIDDLEBROOK.—PLAN OF ALARM SIGNALS FOR THE JERSEYS.—LAFAYETTE'S PROJECT FOR AN INVASION OF CANADA.—FAVORED BY CONGRESS.—CONDEMNED BY WASHINGTON.—RELINQUISHED.—WASHINGTON IN PHILADELPHIA.—THE WAR SPIRIT DECLINING.—DISSENSIONS IN CONGRESS.—SECTIONAL FEELINGS.—PATRIOTIC APPEALS OF WASHINGTON.—PLANS FOR THE NEXT CAMPAIGN.—INDIAN ATROCITIES TO BE REPRESSED.—AVENGING EXPEDITION SET ON FOOT.—DISCONTENTS OF THE JERSEY TROOPS.—APPEASED BY THE INTERFERENCE OF WASHINGTON.—SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE INDIANS.

BOUT the beginning of December, Washington distributed his troops for the winter in a line of strong cantonments extending from Long Island Sound to the Delaware. General Putnam commanded at Danbury, General McDougall in the Highlands, while the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief were near Middlebrook in the Jerseys. The objects of this arrangement were the protection of the country, the security of the important posts on the Hudson, and the safety, discipline, and easy subsistence of the army.

In the course of this winter he devised a plan of alarm signals, which General Philemon Dickinson was employed to carry into effect. On Bottle Hill, which com-

manded a vast map of country, sentinels kept watch day and night. Should there be an irruption of the enemy, an eighteen-pounder, called the Old Sow, fired every half hour, gave the alarm in the day-time or in dark and stormy nights; an immense fire or beacon at other times. On the booming of that heavy gun, lights sprang up from hill to hill along the different ranges of heights; the country was aroused, and the yeomanry, hastily armed, hurried to their gathering places.

Washington was now doomed to experience great loss in the narrow circle of those about him, on whose attachment and devotion he could place implicit reliance. The Marquis Lafayette, seeing no immediate prospect of active employment in the United States, and anticipating a war on the continent of Europe, was disposed to return to France to offer his services to his sovereign; desirous, however, of preserving a relation with America, he merely solicited from Congress the liberty of going home for the next winter; engaging himself not to depart until certain that the campaign was over. Washington backed his application for a furlough, as an arrangement that would still link him with the service; expressing his reluctance to part with an officer who united "to all the military fire of youth an uncommon maturity of judgment." Congress in consequence granted the marquis an unlimited leave of absence, to return to America whenever he should find it convenient.

The marquis, in truth, was full of a grand project for

the following summer's campaign, which he was anxious to lay before the cabinet of Versailles; it was to effect the conquest of Canada by the combined forces, naval and military, of France and the United States. Of course it embraced a wide scope of operations. One body of American troops was to be directed against Detroit; another against Niagara; a third was to seize Oswego, launch a flotilla, and get command of Lake Ontario; and a fourth to penetrate Canada by the river St. Francis, and secure Montreal and the posts on Lake Champlain. While the Americans thus invaded Upper Canada, a French fleet with five thousand men was to ascend the St. Lawrence, and make an attack on Quebec. The scheme met the approbation of a great majority in Congress, who ordered it to be communicated to Dr. Franklin, then minister at Paris, to be laid by him before the French cabinet. Previous to a final determination, the House prudently consulted the opinion of the commander-in-chief. Washington opposed the scheme, both by letter and in a personal interview, with Congress, as too complicated and extensive, and requiring too great resources in men and money to be undertaken with a prospect of success. He opposed it also on political grounds. Though it had apparently originated in a proposition of the Marquis Lafayette, it might have had its birth in the French cabinet, with a view to some ulterior object. He suggested the danger of introducing a large body of French troops into Canada, and putting them in possession of the capital of a prov-

ince attached to them by all the ties of blood, habits, manners, religion, and former connection of government. "Let us realize for a moment," said he, "the striking advantages France would derive from the possession of Canada; an extensive territory, abounding in supplies for the use of her islands; a vast source of the most beneficial commerce with the Indian nations, which she might then monopolize; ports of her own on this continent independent of the precarious good-will of an ally; the whole trade of Newfoundland whenever she pleased to engross it, the finest nursery for seamen in the world; and finally, the facility of awing and controlling these States, the natural and most formidable rival of every maritime power in Europe." All these advantages he feared might prove too great a temptation to be resisted by any power actuated by the common maxims of national policy; and, with all his confidence in the favorable sentiments of France, he did not think it politic to subject her disinterestedness to such a trial. "To waive every other consideration," said he, grandly, in the conclusion of a letter to the President of Congress, "I do not like to add to the number of our national obligations. I would wish, as much as possible, to avoid giving a foreign power new claims of merit for services performed to the United States, and would ask no assistance that is not indispensable."

The strenuous and far-seeing opposition of Washington was at length effectual: and the magnificent, but

hazardous scheme, was entirely, though slowly and reluctantly abandoned. It appears since, that the cabinet of France had really no hand either in originating or promoting it; but, on the contrary, was opposed to any expedition against Canada; and the instructions to their minister forbade him to aid in any such scheme of conquest.

Much of the winter was passed by Washington in Philadelphia, occupied in devising and discussing plans for the campaign of 1779. It was an anxious moment with him. Circumstances which inspired others with confidence, filled him with solicitude. The alliance with France had produced a baneful feeling of security, which, it appeared to him, was paralyzing the energies of the country. England, it was thought, would now be too much occupied in securing her position in Europe, to increase her force or extend her operations in America. Many, therefore, considered the war as virtually at an end; and were unwilling to make the sacrifices, or supply the means necessary for important military undertakings.

Dissensions, too, and party feuds were breaking out in Congress, owing to the relaxation of that external pressure of a common and imminent danger, which had heretofore produced a unity of sentiment and action. That august body had, in fact, greatly deteriorated since the commencement of the war. Many of those whose names had been as watchwords at the Declaration of Independence, had withdrawn from the national councils; occupied

either by their individual affairs, or by the affairs of their individual States. Washington, whose comprehensive patriotism embraced the whole Union, deprecated and deplored the dawning of this sectional spirit. America, he declared, had never stood in more imminent need of the wise, patriotic, and spirited exertions of her sons than at this period. The States, separately, were too much engaged in their local concerns, and had withdrawn too many of their ablest men from the general council, for the good of the common weal. "Our political system," observed he, "is like the mechanism of a clock; it is useless to keep the smaller wheels in order, if the greater one, the prime mover of the whole, is neglected." It was his wish, therefore, that each State should not only choose, but absolutely compel its ablest men to attend Congress, instructed to investigate and reform public abuses.

Nothing can exceed his appeal to the patriotism of his native State, Virginia, in a letter to Colonel Harrison, the speaker of its House of Delegates, written on the 30th of December: "Our affairs are in a more distressed, ruinous, and deplorable condition than they have been since the commencement of the war. By a faithful laborer, then, in the cause; by a man who is daily injuring his private estate without the smallest earthly advantage, not common to all in case of a favorable issue to the dispute; by one who wishes the prosperity of America most devoutly, but sees it, or thinks he sees it, on the brink of ruin; you

are besought most earnestly, my dear Colonel Harrison, to exert yourself in endeavoring to rescue your country, by sending your best and ablest men to Congress. These characters must not slumber nor sleep at home in such a time of pressing danger. They must not content themselves with the enjoyment of places of honor or profit in their own state, while the common interests of America are mouldering and sinking into irretrievable ruin. . . . If I were to be called upon to draw a picture of the times and of men, from what I have seen, heard, and in part know, I should in one word say, that idleness, dissipation, and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most of them; that speculation, peculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches, seem to have got the better of every other consideration, and almost of every order of men; that party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day; while the momentous concerns of an empire, a great and accumulating debt, ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit, which in its consequences is the want of everything, are but secondary considerations, and postponed from day to day, from week to week, as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect. . . . . In the present situation of things, I cannot help asking where are Mason, Wythe, Jefferson, Nicholas, Pendleton, Nelson, and another I could name? And why, if you are sufficiently impressed with your danger, do you not, as New York has done in the case of Mr. Jay, send an extra member or two, for at least a limited

time, till the great business of the nation is put upon a more respectable and happy establishment? . . . . I confess to you I feel more real distress on account of the present appearance of things, than I have done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute."

Nothing seems to have disgusted him more during his visit to Philadelphia, than the manner in which the concerns of the patriot camp were forgotten amid the revelry of the capital. "An assembly, a concert, a dinner, a supper, that will cost three or four hundred pounds, will not only take off men from acting in this business, but even from thinking of it; while a great part of the officers of our army, from absolute necessity, are quitting the service, and the more virtuous few, rather than do this, are sinking by sure degrees into beggary and want."

In discussing the policy to be observed in the next campaign, Washington presumed the enemy would maintain their present posts, and conduct the war as heretofore; in which case he was for remaining entirely on the defensive; with the exception of such minor operations as might be necessary to check the ravages of the Indians. The country, he observed, was in a languid and exhausted state, and had need of repose. The interruption to agricultural pursuits, and the many hands abstracted from husbandry by military service, had produced a scarcity of bread and forage, and rendered it difficult to subsist large armies. Neither was it easy to recruit these armies. There was abundance of employment; wages were high,

the value of money was low; consequently there was but little temptation to enlist. Plans had been adopted to remedy the deranged state of the currency, but they would be slow in operation. Great economy must in the meantime be observed in the public expenditure.

The participation of France in the war, also, and the prospect that Spain would soon be embroiled with England, must certainly divide the attention of the enemy, and allow America a breathing time; these and similar considerations were urged by Washington in favor of a defensive policy. One single exception was made by him. The horrible ravages and massacres perpetrated by the Indians and their tory allies at Wyoming, had been followed by similar atrocities at Cherry Valley, in the State of New York, and called for signal vengeance to prevent a repetition. Washington knew by experience that Indian warfare, to be effective, should never be merely defensive, but must be carried into the enemy's country. The Six Nations, the most civilized of the savage tribes, had proved themselves the most formidable. His idea was to make war upon them in their own style; penetrate their country, lay waste their villages and settlements, and at the same time destroy the British post at Niagara, that nestling place of tories and refugees.

The policy thus recommended was adopted by Congress. An expedition was set on foot to carry that part relative to the Indians into execution: but here a circumstance occurred, which Washington declared gave him

more pain than anything that had happened in the war. A Jersey brigade being ordered to march, the officers of the first regiment hesitated to obey. By the depreciation of paper money, their pay was incompetent to their support; it was, in fact, merely nominal; the consequence was, as they alleged, that they were loaded with debt, and their families at home were starving; yet the Legislature of their State turned a deaf ear to their complaints. Thus aggrieved, they addressed a remonstrance to the Legislature on the subject of their pay, intimating that, should it not receive the immediate attention of that body, they might, at the expiration of three days, be considered as having resigned, and other officers might be appointed in their place.

Here was one of the many dilemmas which called for the judgment, moderation, and great personal weight and influence of Washington. He was eminently the soldier's friend, but he was no less thoroughly the patriot general. He knew and felt the privations and distresses of the army, and the truth of the grievances complained of; but he saw, also, the evil consequences that might result from such a course as that which the officers had adopted. Acting, therefore, as a mediator, he corroborated the statements of the complainants on the one hand, urging on government the necessity of a more general and adequate provision for the officers of the army, and the danger of subjecting them to too severe and continued privations. On the other hand, he represented to

the officers the difficulties with which government itself had to contend from a deranged currency and exhausted resources; and the unavoidable delays that consequently impeded its moneyed operations. He called upon them, therefore, for a further exertion of that patience and perseverance which had hitherto done them the highest honor at home and abroad, had inspired him with unlimited confidence in their virtue, and consoled him amidst every perplexity and reverse of fortune to which the national affairs had been exposed. "Now that we have made so great a progress to the attainment of the end we have in view," observed he, "anything like a change of conduct would imply a very unhappy change of principle, and a forgetfulness, as well of what we owe to ourselves, as to our country. Did I suppose it possible this could be the case even in a single regiment of the army, I should be mortified and chagrined beyond expression. I should feel it as a wound given to my own honor, which I consider as embarked with that of the army at large.

"But the gentlemen," adds he, "cannot be in earnest; they cannot seriously intend anything that would be a stain on their former reputation. They have only reasoned wrong about the means of obtaining a good end; and on consideration, I hope and flatter myself they will renounce what must appear to be improper. At the opening of a campaign, when under marching orders for an important service, their own honor, duty to the public

and to themselves, and a regard to military propriety, will not suffer them to persist in a measure which would be a violation of them all. It will even wound their delicacy, coolly to reflect that they have hazarded a step which has an air of dictating to their country, by taking advantage of the necessity of the moment; for the declaration they have made to the State, at so critical a time, that unless they obtain relief in the short period of three days, they must be considered out of the service, has very much that aspect."

These and other observations of similar purport, were contained in a letter to General Maxwell, their commander, to be laid before the officers. It produced a respectful reply, but one which intimated no disposition to swerve from their determination. After reiterating their grievances, "we are sorry," added they, "that you should imagine we meant to disobey orders. It was and is still our determination to march with our regiment, and to do the duty of officers until the Legislature shall have a reasonable time to appoint others, but no longer. We beg leave to assure your Excellency, that we have the highest sense of your ability and virtues; that executing your orders has ever given us pleasure; that we love the service, and love our country;—but when that country gets so lost to virtue and justice, as to forget to support its servants, it then becomes their duty to retire from its service."

A commander of less magnanimity than Washington,

would have answered this letter by a stern exercise of military rule, and driven the really aggrieved parties to extremity. He nobly contented himself with the following comment on it, forming a paragraph of a letter to General Maxwell. "I am sorry the gentlemen persist in the principles which dictated the step they have taken; as, the more the affair unfolds itself, the more reason I see to disapprove it. But in the present view they have of the matter, and with their present feelings, it is not probable any new argument that could be offered would have more influence than the former. While, therefore, the gentlemen continue in the execution of their duty, as they declare themselves heartily disposed to do, I shall only regret that they have taken a step of which they must hereafter see the impropriety."

The Legislature of New Jersey imitated the forbearance of Washington. Compounding with their pride, they let the officers know that on their withdrawing the memorial, the subject-matter of it would be promptly attended to. It was withdrawn. Resolutions were immediately passed, granting pecuniary supplies to both officers and soldiers. The money was forthwith forwarded to camp, and the brigade marched.

Such was the paternal spirit exercised by Washington, in all the difficulties and discontents of the army. How clearly he understood the genius and circumstances of the people he was called upon to manage; and how truly was he their protector even more than their commander!

We shall briefly dispose of the Indian campaign. The first act was an expedition from Fort Schuyler by Colonel Van Schaick, Lieutenant-colonel Willett, and Major Cochran, with about six hundred men, who, on the 19th of April, surprised the towns of the Onondagas; destroyed the whole settlement, and returned to the fort without the loss of a single man.

The great expedition of the campaign, however, was in revenge of the massacre of Wyoming. Early in the summer, three thousand men assembled in that lately desolated region, and conducted by General Sullivan, moved up the west branch of the Susquehanna into the Seneca country. While on the way, they were joined by a part of the western army, under General James Clinton, who had come from the valley of the Mohawk by Otsego Lake and the east branch of the Susquehanna. The united forces amounted to about five thousand men, of which Sullivan had the general command.

The Indians, and their allies the tories, had received information of the intended invasion, and appeared in arms to oppose it. They were much inferior in force, however, being about fifteen hundred Indians and two hundred white men, commanded by the two Butlers, Johnson, and Brant. A battle took place at Newtown on the 29th of August, in which they were easily defeated, Sullivan then pushed forward into the heart of the Indian country, penetrating as far as the Genesee River, laying everything waste, setting fire to deserted dwellings,

destroying cornfields, orchards, gardens, everything that could give sustenance to man, the design being to starve the Indians out of the country. The latter retreated before him with their families, and at length took refuge under the protection of the British garrison at Niagara. Having completed his errand, Sullivan returned to Easton in Pennsylvania. The thanks of Congress were voted to him and his army, but he shortly resigned his commission on account of ill health, and retired from the service.

A similar expedition was undertaken by Colonel Brodhead, from Pittsburg up the Alleghany, against the Mingo, Muncey, and Seneca tribes, with similar results. The wisdom of Washington's policy of carrying the war against the Indians into their country, and conducting it in their own way was apparent from the general intimidation produced among the tribes by these expeditions, and the subsequent infrequency of their murderous incursions; the instigation of which by the British, had been the most inhuman feature of this war.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

PREDATORY WARFARE OF THE ENEMY.—RAVAGES IN THE CHESAPEAKE.—HOSTILITIES ON THE HUDSON.—VERPLANCK'S POINT AND STONY POINT TAKEN.—CAPTURE OF NEW HAVEN.—FAIRFIELD AND NORWALK DESTROYED.—WASHINGTON PLANS A COUNTER-STROKE.—STORMING OF STONY POINT.—GENEROUS LETTER OF LEE.

THE situation of Sir Henry Clinton must have been mortifying in the extreme to an officer of lofty ambition and generous aims. His force, between sixteen and seventeen thousand strong, was superior in number, discipline, and equipment to that of Washington; yet his instructions confined him to a predatory warfare, carried on by attacks and marauds at distant points, harassing, it is true, yet irritating to the country intended to be conciliated, and brutalizing to his own soldiery. Such was the nature of an expedition set on foot against the commerce of the Chesapeake; by which commerce the armies were supplied and the credit of the government sustained. On the 9th of May, a squadron under Sir George Collier, convoying transports and galleys, with twenty-five hundred men, commanded by General Mathews, entered these waters, took possession of Portsmouth without opposition, sent out armed

parties against Norfolk, Suffolk, Gosport, Kemp's Landing, and other neighboring places, where were immense quantities of provisions, naval and military stores, and merchandise of all kinds; with numerous vessels, some on the stocks, others richly laden. Wherever they went, a scene of plunder, conflagration, and destruction ensued. A few days sufficed to ravage the whole neighborhood.

While this was going on at the South, Washington received intelligence of movements at New York and in its vicinity, which made him apprehend an expedition against the Highlands of the Hudson.

Since the loss of forts Montgomery and Clinton, the main defenses of the Highlands had been established at the sudden bend of the river where it winds between West Point and Constitution Island. Two opposite forts commanded this bend, and an iron chain which was stretched across it.

Washington had projected two works also just below the Highlands, at Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, to serve as outworks of the mountain passes, and to protect King's Ferry, the most direct and convenient communication between the Northern and Middle States.

A small but strong fort had been erected on Verplanck's Point, and was garrisoned by seventy men under Captain Armstrong. A more important work was in progress at Stony Point. When completed, these two forts, on opposite promontories, would form as it were the

lower gates of the Highlands; miniature Pillars of Hercules, of which Stony Point was the Gibraltar.

To be at hand in case of any real attempt upon the Highlands, Washington drew up with his forces in that direction; moving by the way of Morristown.

An expedition up the Hudson was really the object of Sir Henry Clinton's movements, and for this he was strengthened by the return of Sir George Collier with his marauding ships and forces from Virginia. On the 30th of May, Sir Henry set out on his second grand cruise up the Hudson, with an armament of about seventy sail, great and small, and one hundred and fifty flat boats. Admiral Sir George Collier commanded the armament, and there was a land force of about five thousand men under General Vaughan.

The first aim of Sir Henry was to get possession of Stony and Verplanck's Points; his former expedition had acquainted him with the importance of this pass of the river. On the morning of the 31st, the forces were landed in two divisions, the largest under General Vaughan, on the east side of the river, about seven or eight miles below Verplanck's Point; the other, commanded by Sir Henry in person, landed in Haverstraw Bay, about three miles below Stony Point. There were but about thirty men in the unfinished fort; they abandoned it on the approach of the enemy, and retreated into the Highlands, having first set fire to the blockhouse. The British took quiet possession of the fort in the evening,

dragged up cannon and mortars in the night, and at daybreak opened a furious fire upon Fort Lafayette. It was cannonaded at the same time by the armed vessels, and a demonstration was made on it by the division under General Vaughan. Thus surrounded, the little garrison of seventy men was forced to surrender with no other stipulation than safety to their persons and to the property they had in the fort. Major André was aide-de-camp to Sir Henry, and signed the articles of capitulation.

Sir Henry Clinton stationed garrisons in both posts, and set to work with great activity to complete the fortification of Stony Point. His troops remained for several days in two divisions on the opposite sides of the river; the fleet generally fell down a little below King's Ferry; some of the square-rigged vessels, however, with others of a smaller size, and flat-bottomed boats, having troops on board, dropped down Haverstraw Bay, and finally disappeared behind the promontories which advance across the upper part of the Tappan Sea.

Some of the movements of the enemy perplexed Washington exceedingly. He presumed, however, that the main object of Sir Henry was to get possession of West Point, the guardian fortress of the river, and that the capture of Stony and Verplanck's Points were preparatory steps. He would fain have dislodged him from these posts, which cut off all communication by the way of King's Ferry, but they were too strong; he had not the force nor military apparatus necessary. Deferring any

attempt on them for the present, he took measures for the protection of West Point. Leaving General Putnam and the main body of the army at Smith's Clove, a mountain pass in the rear of Haverstraw, he removed his headquarters to New Windsor, to be near West Point in case of need, and to press the completion of its works. General McDougall was transferred to the command of the Point. Three brigades were stationed at different places on the opposite side of the river, under General Heath, from which fatigue parties crossed daily to work on the fortifications.

This strong disposition of the American forces checked Sir Henry's designs against the Highlands. Contenting himself, therefore, for the present, with the acquisition of Stony and Verplanck's Points, he returned to New York; where he soon set on foot a desolating expedition along the seaboard of Connecticut. That State, while it furnished the American armies with provisions and recruits, and infested the sea with privateers, had hitherto experienced nothing of the horrors of war within its borders. Sir Henry, in compliance with his instructions from government, was now about to give it a scourging lesson; and he entertained the hope that, in so doing, he might draw down Washington from his mountain fastnesses, and lay open the Hudson to a successful incursion.

General (late governor) Tryon, was the officer selected by Sir Henry for this inglorious, but apparently congenial service. About the beginning of July he em-

barked with two thousand six hundred men in a fleet of transports and tenders, and was convoyed up the Sound by Sir George Collier with two ships of war.

On the 5th of July, the troops landed near New Haven, in two divisions, one led by Tryon, the other by Brigadier-general Garth, his lieutenant. They came upon the neighborhood by surprise; yet the militia assembled in haste, and made a resolute though ineffectual opposition. The British captured the town, dismantled the fort, and took or destroyed all the vessels in the harbor; with all the artillery, ammunition, and public stores. Several private houses were plundered; but this, it was said, was done by the soldiery contrary to orders. The enemy, in fact, claimed great credit for lenity in refraining from universal sackage, considering the opposition they had experienced while on the march, and that some of the inhabitants of the town had fired upon them from the windows.

They next proceeded to Fairfield; where, meeting with greater resistance, they thought the moment arrived for a wholesome example of severity. Accordingly, they not merely ravaged and destroyed the public stores and the vessels in the harbor, but laid the town itself in ashes. The exact return of this salutary lesson gives the destruction of ninety-seven dwelling-houses, sixty-seven barns and stables, forty-eight store-houses, three places of worship, a court-house, a jail, and two school-houses.

The sight of their homes laid desolate, and their dwell-

ings wrapped in flames, only served to exasperate the inhabitants, and produce a more determined opposition to the progress of the destroyers; whereupon the ruthless ravage of the latter increased as they advanced.

At Norwalk, where they landed on the 11th of July, they burnt one hundred and thirty dwelling-houses, eighty-seven barns, twenty-two store-houses, seventeen shops, four mills, two places of worship, and five vessels which were in the harbor. All this was private property, and the loss fell on individuals engaged in the ordinary occupations of life. These acts of devastation were accompanied by atrocities, inevitable where the brutal passions of the soldiery are aroused. They were unprovoked, too, by any unusual acts of hostility, the militia having no time to assemble, excepting in small parties for the defense of their homes and firesides. The loss of the British throughout the whole expedition amounted, according to their own accounts, to twenty killed, ninety-six wounded, and thirty-two missing.

It was intended to crown this grand ravage by a descent on New London, a noted rendezvous of privateers; but as greater opposition was expected there than at either of the other places, the squadron returned to Huntington Bay, on Long Island, to await reinforcements; and Commodore Collier proceeded to Throg's Neck, to confer with Sir Henry Clinton about further operations.

In this conference Sir Henry was assured that the re-

cent expedition was producing the most salutary effects; that the principal inhabitants were incensed at the apathy of Washington in remaining encamped near the Hudson, while their country was ravaged, and their homes laid in ashes; that they complained equally of Congress, and talked of withdrawing from it their allegiance, and making terms with the British commanders for themselves; finally, it was urged that the proposed expedition against New London would carry these salutary effects still further, and confirm the inhabitants in the sentiments they were beginning to express.

Such were the delusive representations continually made to the British commanders in the course of this war; or rather, such were the delusions in which they themselves indulged, and which led them to the commission of acts calculated to rend still further asunder the kindred countries.

Washington, however, was not culpable of the apathy ascribed to him. On hearing of the departure of the expedition to the eastward, and before he was acquainted with its definite object, he detached General Heath, with two brigades of Connecticut militia, to counteract the movements of the enemy. This was all that he could spare from the force stationed for the protection of the Highlands. Any weakening of his posts there might bring the enemy suddenly upon him, such was their facility in moving from one place to another by means of their shipping. Indeed, he had divined that a scheme

of the kind was at the bottom of the hostile movement to the eastward.

As a kind of counter-check to Sir Henry, he had for some days been planning the recapture of Stony Point and Fort Lafayette. He had reconnoitered them in person; spies had been thrown into them, and information collected from deserters. Stony Point having been recently strengthened by the British, was now the most important. It was a rocky promontory advancing far into the Hudson, which washed three sides of it. A deep morass, covered at high water, separated it from the mainland, but at low tide might be traversed by a narrow causeway and bridge. The promontory was crowned by strong works, furnished with heavy ordnance, commanding the morass and causeway. Lower down were two rows of abatis, and the shore at the foot of the hill could be swept by vessels of war anchored in the river. The garrison was about six hundred strong, commanded by Lieutenant-colonel Johnson.

To attempt the surprisal of this isolated post, thus strongly fortified, was a perilous enterprise. General Wayne, Mad Anthony as he was called from his daring valor, was the officer to whom Washington proposed it, and he engaged in it with avidity.* According to Washington's plan, it was to be attempted by light infantry

* It is a popular tradition, that when Washington proposed to Wayne the storming of Stony Point, the reply was, "General, I'll storm h—ll, if *you* will only plan it."

only, at night, and with the utmost secrecy, securing every person they met to prevent discovery. Between one and two hundred chosen men and officers were to make the surprise; preceded by a vanguard of prudent, determined men, well commanded, to remove obstructions, secure sentries, and drive in the guards. The whole were to advance with fixed bayonets and unloaded muskets; all was to be done with the bayonet. These parties were to be followed by the main body, at a small distance, to support and reinforce them, or to bring them off in case of failure. All were to wear white cockades or feathers, and to have a watchword, so as to be distinguished from the enemy. "The usual time for exploits of this kind," observes Washington, "is a little before day, for which reason a vigilant officer is then more on the watch. I therefore recommend a midnight hour."

On getting possession of Stony Point, Wayne was to turn its guns upon Fort Lafayette and the shipping. A detachment was to march down from West Point by Peekskill, to the vicinity of Fort Lafayette, and hold itself ready to join in the attack upon it, as soon as the cannonade began from Stony Point.

On the 15th of July, about mid-day, Wayne set out with his light infantry from Sandy Beach, fourteen miles distant from Stony Point. The roads were rugged, across mountains, morasses, and narrow defiles, in the skirts of the Dunderberg, where frequently it was necessary to proceed in single file. About eight in the evening, they

arrived within a mile and a half of the forts, without being discovered. Not a dog barked to give the alarm—all the dogs in the neighborhood had been privately destroyed beforehand. Bringing the men to a halt, Wayne and his principal officers went nearer, and carefully reconnoitered the works and their environs, so as to proceed understandingly and without confusion. Having made their observations they returned to the troops. Midnight, it will be recollected, was the time recommended by Washington for the attack. About half-past eleven, the whole moved forward, guided by a negro of the neighborhood who had frequently carried in fruit to the garrison, and served the Americans as a spy. He led the way, accompanied by two stout men disguised as farmers. The countersign was given to the first sentinel, posted on high ground west of the morass. While the negro talked with him, the men seized and gagged him. The sentinel posted at the head of the causeway was served in the same manner; so that hitherto no alarm was given. The causeway, however, was overflowed, and it was some time after twelve o'clock before the troops could cross; leaving three hundred men under General Muhlenberg, on the western side of the morass, as a reserve.

At the foot of the promontory, the troops were divided into two columns, for simultaneous attacks on opposite sides of the works. One hundred and fifty volunteers, led by Lieutenant-colonel Fleury, seconded by Major Posey,

formed the van-guard of the right column. One hundred volunteers under Major Stewart, the van-guard of the left. In advance of each was a forlorn hope of twenty men, one led by Lieutenant Gibbon, the other by Lieutenant Knox; it was their desperate duty to remove the abatis. So well had the whole affair been conducted, that the Americans were close upon the outworks before they were discovered. There was then severe skirmishing at the pickets. The Americans used the bayonet; the others discharged their muskets. The reports roused the garrison. Stony Point was instantly in an uproar. The drums beat to arms; every one hurried to his alarm post; the works were hastily manned, and a tremendous fire of grape-shot and musketry opened upon the assailants.

The two columns forced their way with the bayonet, at opposite points, surmounting every obstacle. Colonel Fleury was the first to enter the fort and strike the British flag. Major Posey sprang to the ramparts and shouted, "The fort is our own." Wayne, who led the right column, received at the inner abatis a contusion on the head from a musket ball, and would have fallen to the ground, but his two aides-de-camp supported him. Thinking it was a death wound, "Carry me into the fort," said he, "and let me die at the head of my column." He was borne in between his aides, and soon recovered his self-possession. The two columns arrived nearly at the same time, and met in the centre of the works. The garrison surrendered at discretion.

At daybreak, as Washington directed, the guns of the fort were turned on Fort Lafayette and the shipping. The latter cut their cables and dropped down the river. Through a series of blunders, the detachment from West Point, which was to have coöperated, did not arrive in time, and came unprovided with suitable ammunition for their battering artillery. This part of the enterprise, therefore, failed; Fort Lafayette held out.

The storming of Stony Point stands out in high relief, as one of the most brilliant achievements of the war. The Americans had effected it without firing a musket. On their part, it was the silent, deadly work of the bayonet; the fierce resistance they met at the outset may be judged by the havoc made in their forlorn hope; out of twenty-two men, seventeen were either killed or wounded. The whole loss of the Americans was fifteen killed and eighty-three wounded. Of the garrison, sixty-three were slain, including two officers; five hundred and fifty-three were taken prisoners, among whom were a lieutenant-colonel, four captains, and twenty-three subaltern officers.

Wayne, in his despatches, writes: "The humanity of our brave soldiery, who scorned to take the lives of a vanquished foe when calling for mercy, reflects the highest honor on them, and accounts for the few of the enemy killed on the occasion." His words reflect honor on himself.

A British historian confirms his eulogy. "The conduct of the Americans upon this occasion was highly meritorious," writes he; "for they would have been fully jus-

tified in putting the garrison to the sword; not one man of which was put to death but in fair combat."*

We are happy to record an instance of generous feeling on the part of General Charles Lee, in connection with Stony Point. When he heard of Wayne's achievement, he wrote to him as follows: "What I am going to say, you will not, I hope, consider as paying my court in this hour of your glory; for, as it is at least my present intention to leave this continent, I can have no interest in paying my court to any individual. What I shall say, therefore, is dictated by the genuine feelings of my heart. I do most sincerely declare, that your assault of Stony Point is not only the most brilliant, in my opinion, throughout the whole course of the war on either side, but that it is the most brilliant I am acquainted with in history; the assault of Schweidnitz by Marshal Laudon, I think inferior to it. I wish you, therefore, most sincerely, joy of the laurels you have deservedly acquired, and that you may long live to wear them."

This is the more magnanimous on the part of Lee, as Wayne had been the chief witness against him in the court-martial after the affair of Monmouth, greatly to his annoyance. While Stony Point, therefore, stands a lasting monument of the daring courage of "Mad Anthony," let it call up the remembrance of this freak of generosity on the part of the eccentric Lee.

* Stedman, vol. i. p. 145.

Tidings of the capture of Stony Point, and the imminent danger of Fort Lafayette, reached Sir Henry Clinton just after his conference with Sir George Collier at Throg's Neck. The expedition against New London was instantly given up; the transports and troops were recalled; a forced march was made to Dobb's Ferry on the Hudson; a detachment was sent up the river in transports to relieve Fort Lafayette, and Sir Henry followed with a greater force, hoping Washington might quit his fastnesses, and risk a battle for the possession of Stony Point.

Again the Fabian policy of the American commander-in-chief disappointed the British general. Having well examined the post in company with an engineer and several general officers, he found that at least fifteen hundred men would be required to maintain it, a number not to be spared from the army at present.

The works, too, were only calculated for defense on the land side, and were open towards the river, where the enemy depended upon protection from their ships. It would be necessary to construct them anew, with great labor. The army, also, would have to be in the vicinity, too distant from West Point to aid in completing or defending its fortifications, and exposed to the risk of a general action on unfavorable terms.

For these considerations, in which all his officers concurred, Washington evacuated the post on the 18th, removing the cannon and stores, and destroying the works;

after which he drew his forces together in the Highlands, and established his quarters at West Point, not knowing but that Sir Henry might attempt a retaliatory stroke on that most important fortress. The latter retook possession of Stony Point, and fortified and garrisoned it more strongly than ever, but was too wary to risk an attempt upon the strongholds of the Highlands. Finding Washington was not to be tempted out of them, he ordered the transports to fall once more down the river, and returned to his former encampment at Philipsburg.

CHAPTER XL.

EXPEDITION AGAINST PENOBSCOT.—NIGHT SURPRISAL OF PAULUS HOOK.—WASHINGTON FORTIFIES WEST POINT.—HIS STYLE OF LIVING THERE.—TABLE AT HEAD-QUARTERS.—SIR HENRY CLINTON REINFORCED.—ARRIVAL OF D'ESTAING ON THE COAST OF GEORGIA.—PLANS IN CONSEQUENCE.—THE FRENCH MINISTER AT WASHINGTON'S HIGHLAND CAMP.—LETTER TO LAFAYETTE.—D'ESTAING COÖPERATES WITH LINCOLN.—REPULSED AT SAVANNAH.—WASHINGTON REINFORCES LINCOLN.—GOES INTO WINTER-QUARTERS.—SIR HENRY CLINTON SENDS AN EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTH.

THE brilliant affair of the storming of Stony Point, was somewhat overshadowed by the result of an enterprise at the eastward, undertaken without consulting Washington. A British detachment from Halifax of seven or eight hundred men, had founded in June a military post on the eastern side of the Bay of Penobscot, nine miles below the river of that name, and were erecting a fort there, intended to protect Nova Scotia, control the frontiers of Massachusetts, and command the vast wooded regions of Maine; whence inexhaustible supplies of timber might be procured for the royal shipyards at Halifax and elsewhere.

The people of Boston, roused by this movement, which invaded their territory, and touched their pride and in-

terests, undertook, on their own responsibility, a naval and military expedition intended to drive off the invaders. All Boston was in a military bustle, enrolling militia and volunteers. An embargo of forty days was laid on the shipping, to facilitate the equipment of the naval armament; a squadron of armed ships and brigantines under Commodore Saltonstall, at length put to sea, convoying transports, on board of which were near four thousand land troops under General Lovel.

Arriving in the Penobscot on the 25th of May, they found Colonel Maclean posted on a peninsula, steep and precipitous toward the bay, and deeply trenched on the land side, with three ships of war anchored before it.

Lovel was repulsed, with some little loss, in an attempt to effect a landing on the peninsula; but finally succeeded before daybreak on the 28th. The moment was propitious for a bold and vigorous blow. The fort was but half finished; the guns were not mounted; the three armed vessels could not have offered a formidable resistance; but, unfortunately, the energy of a Wayne was wanting to the enterprise. Lovel proceeded by regular siege. He threw up works at seven hundred and fifty yards distance, and opened a cannonade, which was continued from day to day, for a fortnight. The enemy availed themselves of the delay to strengthen their works, in which they were aided by men from the ships. Distrustful of the efficiency of the militia and of their continuance in camp, Lovel sent to Boston for a rein-

forcement of continental troops. He only awaited their arrival to carry the place by storm. A golden opportunity was lost by this excess of caution. It gave time for Admiral Collier at New York to hear of this enterprise, and take measures for its defeat.

On the 13th of August, Lovel was astounded by intelligence that the admiral was arrived before the bay with a superior armament. Thus fairly entrapped, he endeavored to extricate his force with as little loss as possible. Before news of Collier's arrival could reach the fort, he reëmbarked his troops in the transports to make their escape up the river. His armed vessels were drawn up in a crescent as if to give battle, but it was merely to hold the enemy in check. They soon gave way; some were captured, others were set on fire or blown up, and abandoned by their crews. The transports being eagerly pursued and in great danger of being taken, disgorged the troops and seamen on the wild shores of the river: whence they had to make the best of their way to Boston, struggling for upwards of a hundred miles through a pathless wilderness, before they reached the settled parts of the country; and several of them perishing through hunger and exhaustion.

If Washington was chagrined by the signal failure of this expedition, undertaken without his advice, he was cheered by the better fortune of one set on foot about the same time, under his own eye, by his young friend, Major Henry Lee of the Virginia dragoons. This active and

daring officer had frequently been employed by him in scouring the country on the west side of the Hudson to collect information, keep an eye upon the enemy's posts, cut off their supplies, and check their foraging parties. The *coup de main* at Stony Point had piqued his emulation. In his communications to head-quarters he intimated that an opportunity presented for an exploit of almost equal daring. In the course of his reconnoitering, and by means of spies, he had discovered that the British post at Paulus Hook, immediately opposite to New York, was very negligently guarded. Paulus Hook is a long, low point of the Jersey shore, stretching into the Hudson, and connected to the main land by a sandy isthmus. A fort had been erected on it, and garrisoned with four or five hundred men, under the command of Major Sutherland. It was a strong position. A creek fordable only in two places rendered the Hook difficult of access. Within this, a deep trench had been cut across the isthmus, traversed by a drawbridge with a barred gate; and still within this was a double row of abatis, extending into the water. The whole position, with the country immediately adjacent, was separated from the rest of Jersey by the Hackensack River, running parallel to the Hudson, at the distance of a very few miles, and only traversable in boats, excepting at the New Bridge, about fourteen miles from Paulus Hook.

Confident in the strength of his position, and its distance from any American force, Major Sutherland had

become remiss in his military precautions; the want of vigilance in a commander soon produces carelessness in subalterns, and a general negligence prevailed in the garrison.

All this had been ascertained by Major Lee; and he now proposed the daring project of surprising the fort at night, and thus striking an insulting blow "within cannon-shot of New York." Washington was pleased with the project; he had a relish for signal enterprises of the kind; he was aware of their striking and salutary effect upon both friend and foe; and he was disposed to favor the adventurous schemes of this young officer. The chief danger in the present one, would be in the evacuation and retreat after the blow had been effected, owing to the proximity of the enemy's force at New York. In consenting to the enterprise, therefore, he stipulated that Lee should not undertake it unless sure, from previous observation, that the post could be carried by instant surprise; when carried, no time was to be lost in attempting to bring off cannon or any other articles; or in collecting stragglers of the garrison who might skulk and hide themselves. He was "to surprise the post, bring off the garrison immediately, and effect a retreat."

On the 18th of August, Lee set out on the expedition, at the head of three hundred men of Lord Stirling's division, and a troop of dismounted dragoons under Captain McLane. The attack was to be made that night. Lest the enemy should hear of their movement, it was given

out that they were on a mere foraging excursion. The road they took lay along that belt of rocky and wooded heights which borders the Hudson, and forms a rugged neck between it and the Hackensack. Lord Stirling followed with five hundred men, and encamped at the New Bridge on that river, to be at hand to render aid if required. As it would be perilous to return along the rugged neck just mentioned, from the number of the enemy encamped along the Hudson, Lee, after striking the blow, was to push for Dow's Ferry on the Hackensack, not far from Paulus Hook, where boats would be waiting to receive him.

It was between two and three in the morning when Lee arrived at the creek which rendered Paulus Hook difficult of access. It happened, fortunately, that Major Sutherland, the British commander, had the day before detached a foraging party under a Major Buskirk, to a part of the country called the English Neighborhood. As Lee and his men approached, they were mistaken by the sentinel for this party on its return. The darkness of the night favored the mistake. They passed the creek and ditch, entered the works unmolested, and had made themselves masters of the post before the negligent garrison were well roused from sleep. Major Sutherland and about sixty Hessians threw themselves into a small block-house on the left of the fort, and opened an irregular fire. To attempt to dislodge them would have cost too much time. Alarm guns from the ships in the river

and the forts at New York threatened speedy reinforcement to the enemy. Having made one hundred and fifty-nine prisoners, among whom were three officers, Lee commenced his retreat without tarrying to destroy either barracks or artillery. He had achieved his object —a *coup de main* of signal audacity. Few of the enemy were slain, for there was but little fighting, and no massacre. His own loss was two men killed and three wounded.

His retreat was attended by perils and perplexities. Through blunder or misapprehension, the boats which he was to have found at Dow's Ferry on the Hackensack, disappointed him; and he had to make his way with his weary troops up the neck of land between that river and the Hudson, in imminent danger of being cut up by Buskirk and his scouting detachment. Fortunately Lord Stirling heard of his peril, and sent out a force to cover his retreat, which was effected in safety. Washington felt the value of this hardy and brilliant exploit. "The increase of confidence," said he, "which the army will derive from this affair and that of Stony Point, though great, will be among the least of the advantages resulting from these events." In a letter to the President of Congress, he extolled the prudence, address, enterprise, and bravery displayed on the occasion by Major Lee; in consequence of which the latter received the signal reward of a gold medal.

Washington was now at West Point, diligently provid-

ing for the defense of the Highlands against any further attempts of the enemy. During the time that he made this his head-quarters, the most important works, we are told, were completed, especially the fort at West Point, which formed the citadel of those mountains.

Of his singularly isolated situation with respect to public affairs, we have evidence in the following passage of a letter to Edmund Randolph, who had recently taken his seat in Congress: "I shall be happy in such communications as your leisure and other considerations will permit you to transmit to me, for I am as totally unacquainted with the political state of things, and what is going forward in the great national council, as if I was an alien; when a competent knowledge of the temper and designs of our allies, from time to time, and the frequent changes and complexion of affairs in Europe might, as they ought to do, have a considerable influence on the operations of our army, and would in many cases determine the propriety of measures, which under a cloud of darkness can only be groped at. I say this upon a presumption that Congress, either through their own ministers or that of France, must be acquainted in some degree with the plans of Great Britain, and the designs of France and Spain. If I mistake in this conjecture, it is to be lamented that they have not better information; or, if political motives render disclosures of this kind improper, I am content to remain in ignorance."

Of the style of living at head-quarters, we have a pic-

ture in the following letter to Doctor John Cochran, the surgeon-general and physician of the army. It is almost the only instance of sportive writing in all Washington's correspondence.

"Dear Doctor,—I have asked Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprise them of their fare? As I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned, I will. It is needless to premise that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered is more essential; and this shall be the purport of my letter.

"Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table: a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-morrow, we have two beefsteak pies, or dishes of crabs, in addition, one on each side of the centre dish, dividing the space and reducing the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which, without them, would be about twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover that apples will make pies, and it is a question, if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples instead of having both of beefsteaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will

submit to partake of it on plates once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them."

We may add, that, however poor the fare and poor the table equipage at head-quarters, everything was conducted with strict etiquette and decorum, and we make no doubt the ladies in question were handed in with as much courtesy to the bacon and greens and tin dishes, as though they were to be regaled with the daintiest viands, served up on enameled plate and porcelain.

The arrival of Admiral Arbuthnot, with a fleet, bringing three thousand troops and a supply of provisions and stores, strengthened the hands of Sir Henry Clinton. Still he had not sufficient force to warrant any further attempt up the Hudson; Washington, by his diligence in fortifying West Point, having rendered that fastness of the Highlands apparently impregnable. Sir Henry turned his thoughts, therefore, towards the South, hoping, by a successful expedition in that direction, to counterbalance ill success in other quarters. As this would require large detachments, he threw up additional works on New York Island and at Brooklyn, to render his position secure with the diminished force that would remain with him.

At this juncture news was received of the arrival of the Count D'Estaing, with a formidable fleet on the coast of Georgia, having made a successful cruise in the West

Indies, in the course of which he had taken St. Vincent's and Grenada. A combined attack upon New York was again talked of. In anticipation of it, Washington called upon several of the Middle States for supplies of all kinds, and reinforcements of militia. Sir Henry Clinton, also, changed his plans; caused Rhode Island to be evacuated; the troops and stores to be brought away; the garrisons brought off from Stony and Verplanck's Points, and all his forces to be concentrated at New York, which he endeavored to put in the strongest posture of defense.

Intelligence recently received, too, that Spain had joined France in hostilities against England, contributed to increase the solicitude and perplexities of the enemy, while it gave fresh confidence to the Americans.

The Chevalier de la Luzerne, minister from France, with Mons. Barbé Marbois, his secretary of legation, having recently landed at Boston, paid Washington a visit at his mountain fortress, bringing letters of introduction from Lafayette. The chevalier not having yet announced himself to Congress, did not choose to be received in his public character. "If he had," writes Washington, "except paying him military honors, it was not my intention to depart from that plain and simple manner of living, which accords with the real interest and policy of men struggling under every difficulty for the attainment of the most inestimable blessing of life, *liberty*."

In conformity with this intention, he welcomed the chevalier to the mountains with the thunder of artillery, and received him at his fortress with military ceremonial; but very probably surprised him with the stern simplicity of his table, while he charmed him with the dignity and grace with which he presided at it. The ambassador evidently acquitted himself with true French suavity and diplomatic tact. "He was polite enough," writes Washington, "to approve my principle, and condescended to appear pleased with our Spartan living. In a word, he made us all exceedingly happy by his affability and good humor while he remained in camp."

The letters from Lafayette spoke of his favorable reception at court, and his appointment to an honorable situation in the French army. "I had no doubt," writes Washington, "that this would be the case. To hear it from yourself adds pleasure to the account. And here, my dear friend, let me congratulate you. None can do it with more warmth of affection, or sincere joy than myself. Your forward zeal in the cause of liberty; your singular attachment to this infant world; your ardent and persevering efforts, not only in America, but since your return to France, to serve the United States; your polite attention to Americans, and your strict and uniform friendship for *me*, have ripened the first impressions of esteem and attachment which I imbibed for you, into such perfect love and gratitude, as neither time nor absence can impair. This will warrant my assuring you that, whether

in the character of an officer at the head of a corps of gallant Frenchmen, if circumstances should require this, whether as a major-general commanding a division of the American army, or whether, after our swords and spears have given place to the ploughshare and the pruning-hook, I see you as a private gentleman, a friend and companion, I shall welcome you with all the warmth of friendship to Columbia's shores; and, in the latter case, to my rural cottage, where homely fare and a cordial reception, shall be substituted for delicacies and costly living. This, from past experience, I know you can submit to; and if the lovely partner of your happiness will consent to participate with *us* in such rural entertainment and amusements, I can undertake, on behalf of Mrs. Washington, that she will do everything in her power to make Virginia agreeable to the marchioness. My inclination and endeavors to do this cannot be doubted, when I assure you, that I love everybody that is dear to you, and consequently participate in the pleasure you feel in the prospect of again becoming a parent, and do most sincerely congratulate you and your lady on this fresh pledge she is about to give you of her love."

Washington's anticipations of a combined operation with D'Estaing against New York were again disappointed. The French admiral, on arriving on the coast of Georgia, had been persuaded to coöperate with the Southern army, under General Lincoln, in an attempt to recover Savannah, which had fallen into the hands of the

British during the preceding year. For three weeks a siege was carried on with great vigor, by regular approaches on land, and cannonade and bombardment from the shipping. On the 9th of October, although the approaches were not complete, and no sufficient breach had been effected, Lincoln and D'Estaing, at the head of their choicest troops, advanced before daybreak to storm the works. The assault was gallant but unsuccessful; both Americans and French had planted their standards on the redoubts, but were finally repulsed. After the repulse, both armies retired from before the place, the French having lost in killed and wounded upwards of six hundred men, the Americans about four hundred. D'Estaing himself was among the wounded, and the gallant Count Pulaski among the slain. The loss of the enemy was trifling, being protected by their works.

The Americans recrossed the Savannah River into South Carolina; the militia returned to their homes, and the French reëmbarked.

The tidings of this reverse, which reached Washington late in November, put an end to all prospect of coöperation from the French fleet; a consequent change took place in all his plans. The militia of New York and Massachusetts, recently assembled, were disbanded, and arrangements were made for the winter. The army was thrown into two divisions; one was to be stationed under General Heath in the Highlands, for the protection of West Point and the neighboring posts; the other and

principal division was to be hutted near Morristown, where Washington was to have his head-quarters. The cavalry were to be sent to Connecticut.

Understanding that Sir Henry Clinton was making preparations at New York for a large embarkation of troops, and fearing they might be destined against Georgia and Carolina, he resolved to detach the greater part of his Southern troops for the protection of those States; a provident resolution, in which he was confirmed by subsequent instructions from Congress. Accordingly, the North Carolina brigade took up its march for Charleston in November, and the whole of the Virginia line in December.

Notwithstanding the recent preparations at New York, the ships remained in port, and the enemy held themselves in collected force there. Doubts began to be entertained of some furtive design nearer at hand, and measures were taken to protect the army against an attack when in winter-quarters. Sir Henry, however, was regulating his movements by those the French fleet might make after the repulse at Savannah. Intelligence at length arrived that it had been dispersed by a violent storm. Count D'Estaing, with a part, had shaped his course for France; the rest had proceeded to the West Indies.

Sir Henry now lost no time in carrying his plans into operation. Leaving the garrison of New York under the command of Lieutenant-general Knyphausen, he em

barked several thousand men, on board of transports, to be convoyed by five ships of the line and several frigates under Admiral Arbuthnot, and set sail on the 26th of December, accompanied by Lord Cornwallis, on an expedition intended for the capture of Charleston and the reduction of South Carolina.

END OF VOLUME III.

LIFE OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING

IN FIVE VOLUMES

VOLUME IV.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by
G. P. PUTNAM AND CO.,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the
Southern District of New York.

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LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

SUFFERINGS OF THE ARMY AT MORRISTOWN.—RIGOROUS WINTER.—DERANGEMENT OF THE CURRENCY.—CONFUSION IN THE COMMISSARIAT.—IMPRESSMENT OF SUPPLIES.—PATRIOTIC CONDUCT OF THE PEOPLE OF NEW JERSEY.—THE BAY OF NEW YORK FROZEN OVER.—LORD STIRLING'S EXPEDITION AGAINST STATEN ISLAND.—KNYPHAUSEN'S INCURSION INTO THE JERSEYS.—CALDWELL'S CHURCH AT ELIZABETHTOWN BURNT.—CHARACTER OF ITS PASTOR.—FORAY INTO WESTCHESTER COUNTY.—BURNING OF YOUNG'S HOUSE IN THE VALLEY OF THE NEPERAN.

THE dreary encampment at Valley Forge has become proverbial for its hardships; yet they were scarcely more severe than those suffered by Washington's army during the present winter, while hutted among the heights of Morristown. The winter set in early, and was uncommonly rigorous. The transportation of supplies was obstructed; the magazines were exhausted, and the commissaries had neither money nor credit to enable them to replenish them. For weeks at a time the army was on half allowance; sometimes without meat, sometimes without bread, sometimes with-

out both. There was a scarcity, too, of clothing and blankets, so that the poor soldiers were starving with cold as well as hunger.

Washington wrote to President Reed of Pennsylvania, entreating aid and supplies from that State to keep his army from disbanding. "We have never," said he, "experienced a like extremity at any period of the war." *

The year 1780 opened upon a famishing camp. "For a fortnight past," writes Washington, on the 8th of January, "the troops, both officers and men, have been almost perishing with want. Yet," adds he, feelingly, "they have borne their sufferings with a patience that merits the approbation, and ought to excite the sympathies of their countrymen."

The severest trials of the Revolution, in fact, were not in the field, where there were shouts to excite and laurels to be won; but in the squalid wretchedness of ill-provided camps, where there was nothing to cheer and everything to be endured. To suffer was the lot of the revolutionary soldier.

A rigorous winter had much to do with the actual distresses of the army, but the root of the evil lay in the derangement of the currency. Congress had commenced the war without adequate funds, and without the power of imposing direct taxes. To meet pressing emergencies, it had emitted paper money, which, for a time, passed

* *Life of Reed*, ii. 189.

currently at par; but sank in value as further emissions succeeded, and that already in circulation remained unredeemed. The several States added to the evil by emitting paper in their separate capacities: thus the country gradually became flooded with a "Continental currency," as it was called; irredeemable, and of no intrinsic value. The consequence was a general derangement of trade and finance. The Continental currency declined to such a degree, that forty dollars in paper were equivalent to only one in specie.

Congress attempted to put a stop to this depreciation, by making paper money a legal tender, at its nominal value, in the discharge of debts, however contracted. This opened the door to knavery, and added a new feature to the evil.

The commissaries now found it difficult to purchase supplies for the immediate wants of the army, and impossible to provide any stores in advance. They were left destitute of funds, and the public credit was prostrated by the accumulating debts suffered to remain uncanceled. The changes which had taken place in the commissary department added to this confusion. The commissary-general, instead of receiving, as heretofore, a commission on expenditures, was to have a fixed salary in paper currency; and his deputies were to be compensated in like manner, without the usual allowance of rations and forage. No competent agents could be procured on such terms; and the derangement produced

throughout the department compelled Colonel Wadsworth, the able and upright commissary-general, to resign.

In the present emergency Washington was reluctantly compelled, by the distresses of the army, to call upon the counties of the State for supplies of grain and cattle, proportioned to their respective abilities. These supplies were to be brought into the camp within a certain time; the grain to be measured and the cattle estimated by any two of the magistrates of the county in conjunction with the commissary, and certificates to be given by the latter, specifying the quantity of each and the terms of payment.

Wherever a compliance with this call was refused, the articles required were to be impressed: it was a painful alternative, yet nothing else could save the army from dissolution or starving. Washington charged his officers to act with as much tenderness as possible, graduating the exaction according to the stock of each individual, so that no family should be deprived of what was necessary to its subsistence. "While your measures are adapted to the emergency," writes he to Colonel Matthias Ogden, "and you consult what you owe to the service, I am persuaded you will not forget that, as we are compelled by necessity to take the property of citizens for the support of an army on which their safety depends, we should be careful to manifest that we have a reverence for their rights, and wish not to do anything which that necessity, and even their own good, do not absolutely require."

To the honor of the magistrates and the people of Jersey, Washington testifies that his requisitions were punctually complied with, and in many counties exceeded. Too much praise, indeed, cannot be given to the people of this State for the patience with which most of them bore these exactions, and the patriotism with which many of them administered to the wants of their countrymen in arms. Exhausted as the State was by repeated drainings, yet, at one time, when deep snows cut off all distant supplies, Washington's army was wholly subsisted by it. "Provisions came in with hearty good-will from the farmers in Medham, Chatham, Hanover, and other rural places, together with stockings, shoes, coats, and blankets; while the women met together to knit and sew for the soldiery." *

As the winter advanced, the cold increased in severity. It was the most intense ever remembered in the country. The great bay of New York was frozen over. No supplies could come to the city by water. Provisions grew scanty, and there was such lack of fire-wood, that old transports were broken up, and uninhabited wooden houses pulled down for fuel. The safety of the city was

* From manuscript notes by the Rev. Joseph Tuttle. This worthy clergymen gives many anecdotes illustrative of the active patriotism of the Jersey women. Anna Kitchel, wife of a farmer of Whippany, is repeatedly his theme of well-merited eulogium. Her potato bin, meal bag, and granary, writes he, had always some comfort for the patriot soldiers. When unable to billet them in her house, a huge kettle filled with meat and vegetables was hung over the fire, that they might not go away hungry.

endangered. The ships of war, immovably ice-bound in its harbor, no longer gave it protection. The insular security of the place was at an end. An army with its heaviest artillery and baggage might cross the Hudson on the ice. The veteran Knyphausen began to apprehend an invasion, and took measures accordingly; the seamen of the ships and transports were landed and formed into companies, and the inhabitants of the city were embodied, officered, and subjected to garrison duty.

Washington was aware of the opportunity which offered itself for a signal *coup de main*, but was not in a condition to profit by it. His troops, hutted among the heights of Morristown, were half fed, half clothed, and inferior in number to the garrison of New York. He was destitute of funds necessary to fit them for the enterprise, and the quartermaster could not furnish means of transportation.

Still, in the frozen condition of the bay and rivers, some minor blow might be attempted, sufficient to rouse and cheer the spirits of the people. With this view, having ascertained that the ice formed a bridge across the strait between the Jersey shore and Staten Island, he projected a descent upon the latter by Lord Stirling with twenty-five hundred men, to surprise and capture a British force of ten or twelve hundred.

His lordship crossed on the night of the 14th of January, from De Hart's Point to the island. His approach was discovered; the troops took refuge in the works,

which were too strongly situated to be attacked; a channel remaining open through the ice across the bay, a boat was despatched to New York for reinforcements.

The projected surprise having thus proved a complete failure, and his own situation becoming hazardous, Lord Stirling recrossed to the Jersey shore with a number of prisoners whom he had captured. He was pursued by a party of cavalry, which he repulsed, and effected a retreat to Elizabethtown. Some few stragglers fell into the hands of the enemy, and many of his men were severely frostbitten.

By way of retort, Knyphausen, on the 25th of January, sent out two detachments to harass the American outposts. One crossed to Paulus Hook, and being joined by part of the garrison of that post, pushed on to Newark, surprised and captured a company stationed there, set fire to the academy, and returned without loss.

The other detachment, consisting of one hundred dragoons and between three and four hundred infantry, under Lieutenant-colonel Boskirk, crossed from Staten Island to Trembly's Point, surprised the picket-guard at Elizabethtown, and captured two majors, two captains, and forty-two privates. This, likewise, was effected without loss. The disgraceful part of the expedition was the burning of the town-house, a church, and a private residence, and the plundering of the inhabitants.

The church destroyed was a Presbyterian place of worship, and its pastor, the Rev. James Caldwell, had

rendered himself an especial object of hostility to both Briton and tory. He was a zealous patriot; had served as chaplain to those portions of the American army that successively occupied the Jerseys; and now officiated in that capacity in Colonel Elias Dayton's regiment, beside occasionally acting as commissary. His church had at times served as hospital to the American soldiers; or shelter to the hastily assembled militia. Its bell was the tocsin of alarm; from its pulpit he had many a time stirred up the patriotism of his countrymen by his ardent, eloquent, and pathetic appeals, laying beside him his pistols before he commenced. His popularity in the army, and among the Jersey people, was unbounded. He was termed by his friends a "rousing gospel preacher," and by the enemy a "frantic priest" and a "rebel firebrand." On the present occasion, his church was set on fire by a virulent tory of the neighborhood, who, as he saw it wrapped in flames, "regretted that the black-coated rebel, Caldwell, was not in his pulpit." We shall have occasion to speak of the fortunes of this pastor and his family hereafter.

Another noted maraud during Knyphausen's military sway, was in the lower part of Westchester County, in a hilly region lying between the British and American lines, which had been the scene of part of the past year's campaign. Being often foraged, its inhabitants had become belligerent in their habits, and quick to retaliate on all marauders.

In this region, about twenty miles from the British outposts, and not far from White Plains, the Americans had established a post of three hundred men at a stone building commonly known as Young's house, from the name of its owner. It commanded a road which passed from north to south down along the narrow but fertile valley of the Sawmill River, now known by its original Indian name of the Neperan. On this road the garrison of Young's house kept a vigilant eye, to intercept the convoys of cattle and provisions which had been collected or plundered by the enemy, and which passed down this valley toward New York. This post had long been an annoyance to the enemy, but its distance from the British lines had hitherto saved it from attack. The country now was covered with snow; troops could be rapidly transported on sleighs; and it was determined that Young's house should be surprised, and this rebel nest broken up.

On the evening of the 2d of February, an expedition set out for the purpose from King's Bridge, led by Lieutenant-colonel Norton, and consisting of four flank companies of guards, two companies of Hessians, and a party of Yagers, all in sleighs; besides a body of Yager cavalry, and a number of mounted Westchester refugees, with two three-pounders.

The snow, being newly fallen, was deep; the sleighs broke their way through it with difficulty. The troops at length abandoned them and pushed forward on foot.

The cannon were left behind for the same reason. It was a weary tramp; the snow in many places was more than two feet deep, and they had to take by-ways and cross-roads to avoid the American patrols.

The sun rose while they were yet seven miles from Young's house. To surprise the post was out of the question; still they kept on. Before they could reach the house the country had taken the alarm, and the Westchester yeomanry had armed themselves, and were hastening to aid the garrison.

The British light infantry and grenadiers invested the mansion; the cavalry posted themselves on a neighboring eminence, to prevent retreat or reinforcement, and the house was assailed. It made a brave resistance, and was aided by some of the yeomanry stationed in an adjacent orchard. The garrison, however, was overpowered; numbers were killed, and ninety taken prisoners. The house was sacked and set in flames; and thus having broken up this stronghold of the country, the party hastened to effect a safe return to the lines with their prisoners, some of whom were so badly wounded that they had to be left at different farm-houses on the road. The detachment reached King's Bridge by nine o'clock the same evening, and boasted that, in this enterprise, they had sustained no other loss than two killed and twenty-three wounded.

Of the prisoners many were doubtless farmers and farmer's sons, who had turned out in defense of their

homes, and were now to be transferred to the horrors of the jail and sugar-house in New York. We give this affair as a specimen of the *petite guerre* carried on in the southern part of Westchester County: the NEUTRAL GROUND, as it was called, but subjected, from its vicinity to the city, to be foraged by the royal forces, and plundered and insulted by refugees and tories. No part of the Union was more harried and trampled down by friend and foe, during the Revolution, than this debatable region and the Jerseys.

WASHINGTON'S VISITING CARD.

CHAPTER II.

ARNOLD IN COMMAND OF PHILADELPHIA.—UNPOPULAR MEASURES.—ARNOLD'S STYLE OF LIVING.—HIS SCHEMES AND SPECULATIONS.—HIS COLLISIONS WITH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.—HIS LAND PROJECT.—CHARGES SENT AGAINST HIM TO CONGRESS.—HIS ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.—CHARGES REFERRED TO A COURT-MARTIAL.—HIS MARRIAGE.—VERDICT OF THE COURT-MARTIAL.—ARNOLD REPRIMANDED.—OBTAINS LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE ARMY.

HE most irksome duty that Washington had to perform during this winter's encampment at Morristown, regarded General Arnold and his military government of Philadelphia in 1778. To explain it requires a glance back to that period.

At the time of entering upon this command, Arnold's accounts with government were yet unsettled, the committee appointed by Congress, at his own request, to examine them, having considered some of his charges dubious, and others exorbitant. Washington, however, still looked upon him with favor, and, but a month previously, had presented him with a pair of epaulettes and a sword-knot, "as a testimony of his sincere regard and approbation."

The command of Philadelphia, at this time, was a delicate and difficult one, and required to be exercised with

extreme circumspection. The boundaries between the powers vested in the military commander, and those inherent in the State government, were ill defined. Disaffection to the American cause prevailed both among the permanent and casual residents, and required to be held in check with firmness but toleration. By a resolve of Congress, no goods, wares, or merchandise were to be removed, transferred, or sold, until the ownership of them could be ascertained by a joint committee of Congress and of the Council of Pennsylvania; any public stores belonging to the enemy were to be seized and converted to the use of the army.

Washington, in his letter of instructions, left it to Arnold's discretion to adopt such measures as should appear to him most effectual and least offensive in executing this resolve of Congress; in which he was to be aided by an assistant quartermaster-general, subject to his directions. "You will take every prudent step in your power," writes Washington, "to preserve tranquillity and order in the city, and give security to individuals of every class and description, restraining, as far as possible, till the restoration of civil government, every species of persecution, insult, or abuse, either from the soldiery to the inhabitants, or among each other."

One of Arnold's first measures was to issue a proclamation enforcing the resolve of Congress. In so doing, he was countenanced by leading personages of Philadelphia, and the proclamation was drafted by General

Joseph Reed. The measure excited great dissatisfaction, and circumstances attending the enforcement of it gave rise to scandal. Former instances of a mercenary spirit made Arnold liable to suspicions, and it was alleged that, while by the proclamation he shut up the stores and shops so that even the officers of the army could not procure necessary articles of merchandise, he was privately making large purchases for his own enrichment.

His style of living gave point to this scandal. He occupied one of the finest houses in the city; set up a splendid establishment; had his carriage and four horses and a train of domestics; gave expensive entertainments, and indulged in a luxury and parade which were condemned as little befitting a republican general; especially one whose accounts with government were yet unsettled, and who had imputations of mercenary rapacity still hanging over him.

Ostentatious prodigality, in fact, was Arnold's besetting sin. To cope with his overwhelming expenses, he engaged in various speculations, more befitting the trafficking habits of his early life than his present elevated position. Nay, he availed himself of that position to aid his speculations, and sometimes made temporary use of the public moneys passing through his hands. In his impatience to be rich, he at one time thought of taking command of a privateer, and making lucrative captures at sea.

In the exercise of his military functions, he had be-

come involved in disputes with the president (Wharton) and executive council of Pennsylvania, and by his conduct, which was deemed arbitrary and arrogant, had drawn upon himself the hostility of that body, which became stern and unsparing censors of his conduct.

He had not been many weeks in Philadelphia before he became attached to one of its reigning belles, Miss Margaret Shippen, daughter of Mr. Edward Shippen, in after years chief justice of Pennsylvania. Her family were not considered well affected to the American cause; the young lady herself, during the occupation of the city by the enemy, had been a "toast" among the British officers, and selected as one of the beauties of the Mischianza.

Arnold paid her addresses in an open and honorable style, first obtaining by letter the sanction of the father. Party feeling at that time ran high in Philadelphia on local subjects connected with the change of the State government. Arnold's connection with the Shippen family increased his disfavor with the president and executive council, who were whigs to a man; and it was sneeringly observed, that "he had courted the loyalists from the start."

General Joseph Reed, at that time one of the executive committee, observes in a letter to General Greene, "Will you not think it extraordinary that General Arnold made a public entertainment the night before last, of which, not only common tory ladies, but the wives

and daughters of persons proscribed by the State, and now with the enemy at New York, formed a very considerable number? The fact is literally true."

Regarded from a different point of view, this conduct might have been attributed to the courtesy of a gallant soldier; who scorned to carry the animosity of the field into the drawing-room, or to proscribe and persecute the wives and daughters of political exiles.

In the beginning of December, General Reed became president of the executive council of Pennsylvania, and under his administration the ripening hostility to Arnold was brought to a crisis. Among the various schemes of the latter for bettering his fortunes, and securing the means of living when the war should come to an end, was one for forming a settlement in the western part of the State of New York, to be composed, principally, of the officers and soldiers who had served under him. His scheme was approved by Mr. John Jay, the pure-minded patriot of New York, at that time President of Congress, and was sanctioned by the New York delegation. Provided with letters from them, Arnold left Philadelphia about the 1st of January (1779), and set out for Albany to obtain a grant of land for the purpose, from the New York Legislature.

Within a day or two after his departure, his public conduct was discussed in the executive council of Pennsylvania, and it was resolved unanimously, that the course of his military command in the city had been in many

respects oppressive, unworthy of his rank and station, and highly discouraging to the liberties and interests of America, and disrespectful to the supreme executive authority of the State.

As he was an officer of the United States, the complaints and grievances of Pennsylvania were set forth by the executive council in eight charges, and forwarded to Congress, accompanied by documents, and a letter from President Reed.

Information of these facts, with a printed copy of the charges, reached Arnold at Washington's camp on the Raritan, which he had visited while on the way to Albany. His first solicitude was about the effect they might have upon Miss Shippen, to whom he was now engaged. In a letter dated February 8th, he entreated her not to suffer these rude attacks on him to give her a moment's uneasiness—they could do him no injury.

On the following day he issued an address to the public, recalling his faithful services of nearly four years, and inveighing against the proceedings of the president and council; who, not content with injuring him in a cruel and unprecedented manner with Congress, had ordered copies of their charges to be printed and dispersed throughout the several States, for the purpose of prejudicing the public mind against him, while the matter was yet in suspense. "Their conduct," writes he, "appears the more cruel and malicious, in making the charges after I had left the city; as my intention of leaving the city

was known for five weeks before." This complaint, we must observe, was rebutted, on their part, by the assertion that, at the time of his departure, he knew of the accusation that was impending.

In conclusion, Arnold informed the public that he had requested Congress to direct a court-martial to inquire into his conduct, and trusted his countrymen would suspend their judgment in the matter, until he should have an opportunity of being heard.

Public opinion was divided. His brilliant services spoke eloquently in his favor. His admirers repined that a fame won by such daring exploits on the field should be stifled down by cold calumnies in Philadelphia; and many thought, dispassionately, that the State authorities had acted with excessive harshness towards a meritorious officer, in widely spreading their charges against him, and thus, in an unprecedented way, putting a public brand upon him.

On the 16th of February, Arnold's appeal to Congress was referred to the committee which had under consideration the letter of President Reed and its accompanying documents, and it was charged to make a report with all convenient despatch. A motion was made to suspend Arnold from all command during the inquiry. To the credit of Congress it was negatived.

Much contrariety of feeling prevailed on the subject in the committee of Congress and the executive council of Pennsylvania, and the correspondence between those

legislative bodies was occasionally tinctured with needless acrimony.

Arnold, in the course of January, had obtained permission from Washington to resign the command of Philadelphia, but deferred to act upon it, until the charges against him should be examined, lest, as he said, his enemies should misinterpret his motives, and ascribe his resignation to fear of a disgraceful suspension in consequence of those charges.

About the middle of March, the committee brought in a report exculpating him from all criminality in the matters charged against him. As soon as the report was brought in, he considered his name vindicated, and resigned.

Whatever exultation he may have felt was short-lived. Congress did not call up and act upon the report, as, in justice to him, they should have done, whether to sanction it or not; but referred the subject anew to a joint committee of their body and the assembly and council of Pennsylvania. Arnold was at this time on the eve of marriage with Miss Shippen, and, thus circumstanced, it must have been peculiarly galling to his pride to be kept under the odium of imputed delinquencies.

The report of the joint committee brought up animated discussions in Congress. Several resolutions recommended by the committee were merely of a formal nature, and intended to soothe the wounded sensibilities of Pennsylvania; these were passed without dissent; but it was contended that certain charges advanced by the

executive council of that State were only cognizable by a court-martial, and, after a warm debate, it was resolved (April 3d), by a large majority, that the commander-in-chief should appoint such a court for the consideration of them.

Arnold inveighed bitterly against the injustice of subjecting him to a trial before a military tribunal for alleged offenses of which he had been acquitted by the committee of Congress. He was sacrificed, he said, to avoid a breach with Pennsylvania. In a letter to Washington, he charged it all to the hostility of President Reed, who, he affirmed, had by his address kept the affair in suspense for two months, and at last obtained the resolution of Congress directing the court-martial. He urged Washington to appoint a speedy day for the trial, that he might not linger under the odium of an unjust public accusation. "I have no doubt of obtaining justice from a court-martial," writes he, "as every officer in the army must feel himself injured by the cruel and unprecedented treatment I have met with. . . . . When your Excellency considers my sufferings, and the cruel situation I am in, your own humanity and feeling as a soldier will render everything I can say further on the subject unnecessary."

It was doubtless soothing to his irritated pride, that the woman on whom he had placed his affections remained true to him; for his marriage with Miss Shippen took place just five days after the mortifying vote of Congress.

Washington sympathized with Arnold's impatience, and appointed the 1st of May for the trial, but it was repeatedly postponed; first, at the request of the Pennsylvania council, to allow time for the arrival of witnesses from the South; afterwards, in consequence of threatening movements of the enemy, which obliged every officer to be at his post. Arnold, in the meantime, continued to reside at Philadelphia, holding his commission in the army, but filling no public office; getting deeper and deeper in debt, and becoming more and more unpopular.

Having once been attacked in the street in the course of some popular tumult, he affected to consider his life in danger, and applied to Congress for a guard of Continental soldiers, "as no protection was to be expected from the authority of the State for an honest man."

He was told in reply that his application ought to have been made to the executive authority of Pennsylvania; "in whose disposition to protect every honest citizen, Congress had full confidence, *and highly disapproved the insinuation of every individual to the contrary.*"

For months, Arnold remained in this anxious and irritated state. His situation, he said, was cruel. His character would continue to suffer until he should be acquitted by a court-martial, and he would be effectually prevented from joining the army, which he wished to do as soon as his wounds would permit, that he might render the country every service in his power in this critical time. "For though I have been ungratefully treated,"

adds he, "I do not consider it as from my countrymen in general, but from a set of men, who, void of principle, are governed entirely by private interest."

At length, when the campaign was over, and the army had gone into winter quarters, the long-delayed court-martial was assembled at Morristown. Of the eight charges originally advanced against Arnold by the Pennsylvania council, four only came under cognizance of the court. Of two of these he was entirely acquitted. The remaining two were—

First. That while in the camp at Valley Forge, he, without the knowledge of the commander-in-chief, or the sanction of the State government, had granted a written permission for a vessel belonging to disaffected persons, to proceed from the port of Philadelphia, then in possession of the enemy, to any port of the United States.

Second. That, availing himself of his official authority, he had appropriated the public wagons of Pennsylvania, when called forth on a special emergency, to the transportation of private property, and that of persons who voluntarily remained with the enemy, and were deemed disaffected to the interests and independence of America.

In regard to the first of these charges, Arnold alleged that the person who applied for the protection of the vessel, had taken the oath of allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania required by the laws; that he was not residing in Philadelphia at the time, but had applied on behalf of himself and a company, and that the intentions

of that person and his associates with regard to the vessel and cargo appeared to be upright.

As to his having granted the permission without the knowledge of the commander-in-chief, though present in the camp, Arnold alleged that it was customary in the army for general officers to grant passes and protections to inhabitants of the United States, friendly to the same, and that the protection was given in the present instance, to prevent the soldiery from plundering the vessel and cargo, coming from a place in possession of the enemy, until the proper authority could take cognizance of the matter.

In regard to the second charge, while it was proved that under his authority wagons had been so used, it was allowed in extenuation, that they had been employed at private expense, and without any design to defraud the public or impede the military service.

In regard to both charges, nothing fraudulent on the part of Arnold was proved, but the transactions involved in the first were pronounced irregular, and contrary to one of the articles of war; and in the second, imprudent and reprehensible, considering the high station occupied by the general at the time; and the court sentenced him to be reprimanded by the commander-in-chief. The sentence was confirmed by Congress on the 12th of February (1780).

We have forborne to go into all the particulars of this trial, but we have considered them attentively, discharg

ing from our minds, as much as possible, all impressions produced by Arnold's subsequent history, and we are surprised to find, after the hostility manifested against him by the council of Pennsylvania, and their extraordinary measure to possess the public mind against him, how venial are the trespasses of which he stood convicted.

He may have given personal offense by his assuming vanity; by the arrogant exercise of his military authority; he may have displeased by his ostentation, and awakened distrust by his speculating propensities; but as yet his patriotism was unquestioned. No turpitude had been proved against him; his brilliant exploits shed a splendor round his name, and he appeared before the public, a soldier crippled in their service. All these should have pleaded in his favor, should have produced indulgence of his errors, and mitigated that animosity which he always contended had been the cause of his ruin.

The reprimand adjudged by the court-martial was administered by Washington with consummate delicacy. The following were his words, as repeated by M. de Marbois, the French secretary of legation:—

"Our profession is the chastest of all: even the shadow of a fault tarnishes the lustre of our finest achievements. The least inadvertence may rob us of the public favor, so hard to be acquired. I reprehend you for having forgotten, that, in proportion as you had rendered yourself for-

midable to our enemies, you should have been guarded and temperate in your deportment towards your fellow-citizens.

"Exhibit anew those noble qualities which have placed you on the list of our most valued commanders. I will myself furnish you, as far as it may be in my power, with opportunities of regaining the esteem of your country."

A reprimand so mild and considerate, accompanied by such high eulogiums and generous promises, might have had a favorable effect upon Arnold, had he been in a different frame of mind; but he had persuaded himself that the court would incline in his favor and acquit him altogether, and he resented deeply a sentence, which he protested against as unmerited. His resentment was aggravated by delays in the settlement of his accounts, as he depended upon the sums he claimed as due to him, for the payment of debts by which he was harassed. In following the matter up, he became a weary, and probably irritable, applicant at the halls of Congress, and, we are told, gave great offense to members by his importunity, while he wore out the patience of his friends; but public bodies are prone to be offended by the importunity of baffled claimants, and the patience of friends is seldom proof against the reiterated story of a man's prolonged difficulties.

In the month of March, we find him intent on a new and adventurous project. He had proposed to the Board of Admiralty an expedition, requiring several ships of

war and three or four hundred land troops, offering to take command of it should it be carried into effect, as his wounds still disabled him from duty on land. Washington, who knew his abilities in either service, was disposed to favor his proposition, but the scheme fell through from the impossibility of sparing the requisite number of men from the army. What Arnold's ultimate designs might have been in seeking such a command, are rendered problematical by his subsequent conduct. On the failure of the project, he requested and obtained from Washington leave of absence from the army for the summer, there being, he said, little prospect of an active campaign, and his wounds unfitting him for the field.

CHAPTER III.

SOUTH CAROLINA THREATENED.—ITS CONDITION AND POPULATION.—STORMY VOYAGE OF SIR HENRY CLINTON.—LOSS OF HORSES.—CHARACTER OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TARLETON.—FLEET ARRIVES AT TYBEE.—SIR HENRY CLINTON ADVANCES UPON CHARLESTON.—LINCOLN PREPARES FOR DEFENSE.—COMMODORE WHIPPLE.—GOVERNOR RUTLEDGE.—FOREBODINGS OF WASHINGTON.—EMBARKATION OF BRITISH TROOPS AT NEW YORK.—WASHINGTON SENDS DE KALB WITH REINFORCEMENTS.—HIS HOPEFUL LETTER TO STEUBEN.

THE return of spring brought little alleviation to the sufferings of the army at Morristown. All means of supplying its wants or recruiting its ranks were paralyzed by the continued depreciation of the currency. While Washington saw his forces gradually diminishing, his solicitude was intensely excited for the safety of the Southern States. The reader will recall the departure from New York, in the latter part of December, of the fleet of Admiral Arbuthnot with the army of Sir Henry Clinton, destined for the subjugation of South Carolina. "The richness of the country," says Colonel Tarleton, in his history of the campaign, "its vicinity to Georgia, and its distance from General Washington, pointed out the advantage and facility of its con-

quest. While it would be an unspeakable loss to the Americans, the possession of it would tend to secure to the crown the southern part of the continent which stretches beyond it." It was presumed that the subjugation of it would be an easy task. The population was scanty for the extent of the country, and was made up of emigrants, or the descendants of emigrants, from various lands and of various nations: Huguenots, who had emigrated from France after the revocation of the edict of Nantz; Germans, from the Palatinate; Irish Protestants, who had received grants of land from the crown; Scotch Highlanders, transported hither after the disastrous battle of Culloden; Dutch colonists, who had left New York, after its submission to England, and been settled here on bounty lands.

Some of these foreign elements might be hostile to British domination, but others would be favorable. There was a large class, too, that had been born or had passed much of their lives in England, who retained for it a filial affection, spoke of it as *home*, and sent their children to be educated there.

The number of slaves within the province and of savages on its western frontier, together with its wide extent of unprotected sea-coast, were encouragements to an invasion by sea and land. Little combination of militia and yeomanry need be apprehended from a population sparsely scattered, and where the settlements were widely separated by swamps and forests. Washington

was in no condition to render prompt and effectual relief, his army being at a vast distance, and considered, as "in a great measure broken up." The British, on the contrary, had the advantage of their naval force, "there being nothing then in the American seas which could even venture to look at it." *

Such were some of the considerations which prompted the enemy to this expedition; and which gave Washington great anxiety concerning it.

General Lincoln was in command at Charleston, but uncertain as yet of the designs of the enemy, and at a loss what course to pursue. Diffident of himself, and accustomed to defer to the wisdom of Washington, he turns to him in his present perplexity. "It is among my misfortunes," writes he, modestly (January 23d), "that I am not near enough to your Excellency to have the advantage of your advice and direction. I feel my own insufficiency and want of experience. I can promise you nothing but a disposition to serve my country. If this town should be attacked, as now threatened, I know my duty will call me to defend it, as long as opposition can be of any avail. I hope my inclination will coincide with my duty."

The voyage of Sir Henry Clinton proved long and tempestuous. The ships were dispersed. Several fell into the hands of the Americans. One ordnance vessel

* *Ann. Register*, 1780, p. 217.

foundered. Most of the artillery horses, and all those of the cavalry perished. The scattered ships rejoined each other about the end of January, at Tybee Bay on Savannah River, where those that had sustained damage were repaired as speedily as possible. The loss of the cavalry horses was especially felt by Sir Henry. There was a corps of two hundred and fifty dragoons, on which he depended greatly in the kind of guerrilla warfare he was likely to pursue, in a country of forests and morasses. Lieutenant-colonel Banastre Tarleton who commanded them, was one of those dogs of war, which Sir Henry was prepared to let slip on emergencies, to scour and maraud the country. This "bold dragoon," so noted in Southern warfare, was about twenty-six years of age, of a swarthy complexion, with small, black, piercing eyes. He is described as being rather below the middle size, square-built and strong, "with large muscular legs." It will be found that he was a first-rate partisan officer, prompt, ardent, active, but somewhat unscrupulous.

Landing from the fleet, perfectly dismounted, he repaired with his dragoons, in some of the quartermaster's boats, to Port Royal Island, on the seaboard of South Carolina, "to collect at that place, from friends or enemies, by money or by force, all the horses belonging to the islands in the neighborhood." He succeeded in procuring horses, though of an inferior quality to those he had lost, but consoled himself with the persuasion that he would secure better ones in the course of the cam-

paign, by "exertion and enterprise," — a vague phrase, but very significant in the partisan vocabulary.

In the meantime the transports, having on board a great part of the army, sailed under convoy on the 10th of February, from Savannah to North Edisto Sound, where the troops disembarked on the 11th, on St. John's Island, about thirty miles below Charleston. Thence, Sir Henry Clinton set out for the banks of Ashley River, opposite to the city, while a part of the fleet proceeded round by sea, for the purpose of blockading the harbor. The advance of Sir Henry was slow and cautious. Much time was consumed by him in fortifying intermediate ports, to keep up a secure communication with the fleet. He ordered from Savannah all the troops that could be spared, and wrote to Knyphausen at New York, for reinforcements from that place. Every precaution was taken by him to insure against a second repulse from before Charleston, which might prove fatal to his military reputation.

General Lincoln took advantage of this slowness on the part of his assailant, to extend and strengthen the works. Charleston stands at the end of an isthmus formed by the Ashley and Cooper rivers. Beyond the main works on the land side he cut a canal, from one to the other of the swamps which border these rivers. In advance of the canal were two rows of abatis and a double picketed ditch. Within the canal, and between it and the main works, were strong redoubts and bat-

teries, to open a flanking fire on any approaching column, while an inclosed hornwork of masonry formed a kind of citadel.

A squadron commanded by Commodore Whipple, and composed of nine vessels of war, of various sizes, the largest mounting forty-four guns, was to coöperate with forts Moultrie and Johnston, and the various batteries, in the defense of the harbor. They were to lie before the bar so as to command the entrance of it. Great reliance also was placed on the bar itself, which it was thought no ship-of-the-line could pass.

Governor Rutledge, a man eminent for talents, patriotism, firmness, and decision, was clothed with dictatorial powers during the present crisis; he had called out the militia of the State, and it was supposed they would duly obey the call. Large reinforcements of troops also were expected from the North. Under all these circumstances, General Lincoln yielded to the entreaties of the inhabitants, and instead of remaining with his army in the open country, as he had intended, shut himself up with them in the place for its defense, leaving merely his cavalry and two hundred light troops outside, who were to hover about the enemy and prevent small parties from marauding.

It was not until the 12th of March that Sir Henry Clinton effected his tardy approach, and took up a position on Charleston Neck, a few miles above the town. Admiral Arbuthnot soon showed an intention of introducing his ships into the harbor; barricading their

waists, anchoring them in a situation where they might take advantage of the first favorable spring-tide, and fixing buoys on the bar for their guidance. Commodore Whipple had by this time ascertained by sounding that a wrong idea had prevailed of the depth of water in the harbor, and that his ships could not anchor nearer than within three miles of the bar, so that it would be impossible for him to defend the passage of it. He quitted his station within it, therefore, after having destroyed a part of the enemy's buoys, and took a position where his ships might be abreast, and form a cross-fire with the batteries of Fort Moultrie, where Colonel Pinckney commanded.

Washington was informed of these facts by letters from his former aide-de-camp, Colonel Laurens, who was in Charleston at the time. The information caused anxious forebodings. "The impracticability of defending the bar, I fear, amounts to the loss of the town and garrison," writes he in reply. "It really appears to me, that the propriety of attempting to defend the town, depended on the probability of defending the bar, and that when this ceased, the attempt ought to have been relinquished." The same opinion was expressed by him in a letter to Baron Steuben; "but at this distance," adds he considerately, "we can form a very imperfect judgment of its propriety or necessity. I have the greatest reliance in General Lincoln's prudence, but I cannot forbear dreading the event."

His solicitude for the safety of the South was increased, by hearing of the embarkation at New York of two thousand five hundred British and Hessian troops, under Lord Rawdon, reinforcements for Sir Henry Clinton. It seemed evident the enemy intended to push their operations with vigor at the South; perhaps, to make it the principal theatre of the war. "We are now beginning," said Washington, "to experience the fatal consequences of the policy which delayed calling upon the States for their quotas of men in time to arrange and prepare them for the duties of the field. What to do for the Southern States, without involving consequences equally alarming in this quarter, I know not."

Gladly would he have hastened to the South in person, but at this moment his utmost vigilance was required to keep watch upon New York and maintain the security of the Hudson, the vital part of the confederacy. The weak state of the American means of warfare in both quarters, presented a choice of difficulties. The South needed support. Could the North give it without exposing itself to ruin, since the enemy, by means of their ships, could suddenly unite their forces, and fall upon any point that they might consider weak? Such were the perplexities to which he was continually subjected, in having, with scanty means, to provide for the security of a vast extent of country, and with land forces merely, to contend with an amphibious enemy.

"Congress will better conceive in how delicate a situ-

ation we stand," writes he, "when I inform them, that the whole operating force present on this and the other side of the North River, amounts only to ten thousand four hundred rank and file, of which about two thousand eight hundred will have completed their term of service by the last of May; while the enemy's regular force at New York and its dependencies, must amount, upon a moderate calculation, to about eleven thousand rank and file. Our situation is more critical from the impossibility of concentrating our force, as well for the want of the means of taking the field, as on account of the early period of the season." *

Looking, however, as usual, to the good of the whole Union, he determined to leave something at hazard in the Middle States, where the country was internally so strong, and yield further succor to the Southern States, which had not equal military advantages. With the consent of Congress, therefore, he put the Maryland line under marching orders, together with the Delaware regiment, which acted with it and the first regiment of artillery.

The Baron de Kalb, now at the head of the Maryland division, was instructed to conduct this detachment with all haste to the aid of General Lincoln. He might not arrive in time to prevent the fall of Charleston, but he might assist to arrest the progress of the enemy and save the Carolinas.

* Letter to the President, April 2d.

Washington had been put upon his guard of late against intrigues, forming by members of the old Conway Cabal, who intended to take advantage of every military disaster to destroy confidence in him. His steady mind, however, was not to be shaken by suspicion. "Against intrigues of this kind incident to every man of a public station," said he, "his best support will be a faithful discharge of his duty, and he must rely on the justice of his country for the event."

His feelings at the present juncture are admirably expressed in a letter to the Baron de Steuben. "The prospect, my dear Baron, is gloomy, and the storm threatens, but I hope we shall extricate ourselves, and bring everything to a prosperous issue. I have been so inured to difficulties, in the course of this contest, that I have learned to look upon them with more tranquillity than formerly. Those which now present themselves, no doubt require vigorous exertions to overcome them, *and I am far from despairing of doing it.*" *

* *Washington's Writings*, vii. 10.

CHAPTER IV.

EVILS OF THE CONTINENTAL CURRENCY.—MILITARY REFORMS PROPOSED BY WASHINGTON.—CONGRESS JEALOUS OF MILITARY POWER.—COMMITTEE OF THREE SENT TO CONFER WITH WASHINGTON.—LOSSES BY DEPRECIATION OF THE CURRENCY TO BE MADE GOOD TO THE TROOPS.—ARRIVAL OF LAFAYETTE.—SCHEME FOR A COMBINED ATTACK UPON NEW YORK.—ARNOLD HAS DEBTS AND DIFFICULTIES.—HIS PROPOSALS TO THE FRENCH MINISTER.—ANXIOUS TO RETURN TO THE ARMY.—MUTINY OF THE CONNECTICUT TROOPS.—WASHINGTON WRITES TO REED FOR AID FROM PENNSYLVANIA.—GOOD EFFECTS OF HIS LETTER.

WE have cited the depreciation of the currency as a main cause of the difficulties and distresses of the army. The troops were paid in paper money at its nominal value. A memorial of the officers of the Jersey line to the legislature of their State, represented the depreciation to be so great, that four months' pay of a private soldier would not procure for his family a single bushel of wheat; the pay of a colonel would not purchase oats for his horse, and a common laborer or express rider could earn four times the pay in paper of an American officer.

Congress, too, in its exigencies, being destitute of the power of levying taxes, which vested in the State govern-

ments, devolved upon those governments, in their separate capacities, the business of supporting the army. This produced a great inequality in the condition of the troops; according to the means and the degree of liberality of their respective States. Some States furnished their troops amply, not only with clothing, but with many comforts and conveniences; others were more contracted in their supplies; while others left their troops almost destitute. Some of the States, too, undertook to make good to their troops the loss in their pay caused by the depreciation of the currency. As this was not general, it increased the inequality of condition. Those who fared worse than others were incensed, not only against their own State, but against the confederacy. They were disgusted with a service that made such injurious distinctions. Some of the officers resigned, finding it impossible, under actual circumstances, to maintain an appearance suitable to their rank. The men had not this resource. They murmured and showed a tendency to seditious combinations.

These, and other defects in the military system, were pressed by Washington upon the attention of Congress in a letter to the president: "It were devoutly to be wished," observed he, "that a plan could be devised by which everything relating to the army could be conducted on a general principle, under the direction of Congress. This alone can give harmony and consistency

to our military establishment, and I am persuaded it will be infinitely conducive to public economy." *

In consequence of this letter it was proposed in Congress to send a committee of three of its members to head-quarters to consult with the commander-in-chief, and, in conjunction with him, to effect such reforms and changes in the various departments of the army as might be deemed necessary. Warm debates ensued. It was objected that this would put too much power into a few hands, and especially into those of the commander-in-chief: "*that his influence was already too great; that even his virtues afforded motives for alarm; that the enthusiasm of the army, joined to the kind of dictatorship already confided to him, put Congress and the United States at his mercy; that it was not expedient to expose a man of the highest virtues to such temptations.*" *

The foregoing passage from a despatch of the French minister to his government, is strongly illustrative of the cautious jealousy still existing in Congress with regard to military power, even though wielded by Washington.

After a prolonged debate, a committee of three was chosen by ballot; it consisted of General Schuyler and Messrs. John Mathews and Nathaniel Peabody. It was a great satisfaction to Washington to have his old friend and coadjutor, Schuyler, near him in this capacity, in which, he declared, no man could be more useful, "from

* *Washington's Writings*, Sparks, vol. vii. p. ii.
† *Ibid.*, vii. p. 15.

his perfect knowledge of the resources of the country, the activity of his temper, his fruitfulness of expedients, and his sound military sense."*

The committee, on arriving at the camp, found the disastrous state of affairs had not been exaggerated. For five months the army had been unpaid. Every department was destitute of money or credit; there were rarely provisions for six days in advance; on some occasions the troops had been for several successive days without meat; there was no forage; the medical department had neither tea, chocolate, wine, nor spirituous liquors of any kind. "Yet the men," said Washington, "have borne their distress in general, with a firmness and patience never exceeded, and every commendation is due to the officers for encouraging them to it by exhortation and example. They have suffered equally with the men, and, their relative situations considered, rather more." Indeed, we have it from another authority, that many officers for some time lived on bread and cheese, rather than take any of the scanty allowance of meat from the men.†

To soothe the discontents of the army, and counteract the alarming effects of the currency, Congress now adopted the measure already observed by some of the States, and engaged to make good to the continental and the independent troops the difference in the value of

* Washington to James Duane, Sparks, vii. 34.

† Gen. William Laine to Joseph Reed. Reed's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 201.

their pay caused by this depreciation; and that all moneys or other articles heretofore received by them, should be considered as advanced on account, and comprehended at their just value in the final settlement.

At this gloomy crisis came a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, dated April 27th, announcing his arrival at Boston. Washington's eyes, we are told, were suffused with tears as he read this most welcome epistle, and the warmth with which he replied to it, showed his affectionate regard for this young nobleman. "I received your letter," writes he, "with all the joy that the sincerest friendship could dictate, and with that impatience which an ardent desire to see you could not fail to inspire. . . . I most sincerely congratulate you on your safe arrival in America, and shall embrace you with all the warmth of an affectionate friend when you come to head-quarters, where a bed is prepared for you."

He would immediately have sent a troop of horse to escort the marquis through the tory settlements between Morristown and the Hudson, had he known the route he intended to take; the latter, however, arrived safe at head-quarters on the 12th of May, where he was welcomed with acclamations, for he was popular with both officers and soldiers. Washington folded him in his arms in a truly parental embrace, and they were soon closeted together to talk over the state of affairs, when Lafayette made known the result of his visit to France. His generous efforts at court had been crowned with success, and

he brought the animating intelligence that a French fleet, under the Chevalier de Ternay, was to put to sea early in April, bring a body of troops under the Count de Rochambeau, and might soon be expected on the coast to coöperate with the American forces; this, however, he was at liberty to make known only to Washington and Congress.

Remaining but a single day at head-quarters, he hastened on to the seat of government, where he met the reception which his generous enthusiasm in the cause of American Independence had so fully merited. Congress, in a resolution on the 16th of May, pronounced his return to America to resume his command a fresh proof of the disinterested zeal and persevering attachment which had secured him the public confidence and applause, and received with pleasure a "tender of the further services of so gallant and meritorious an officer."

Within three days after the departure of the marquis from Morristown, Washington, in a letter to him, gave his idea of the plan which it would be proper for the French fleet and army to pursue on their arrival upon the coast. The reduction of New York he considered the first enterprise to be attempted by the coöperating forces. The whole effective land force of the enemy he estimated at about eight thousand regulars and four thousand refugees, with some militia, on which no great dependence could be placed. Their naval force consisted of one seventy-four gun ship, and three or four small frigates. In this

situation of affairs the French fleet might enter the harbor and gain possession of it without difficulty, cut off its communications, and, with the coöperation of the American army, oblige the city to capitulate. He advised Lafayette, therefore, to write to the French commanders, urging them, on their arrival on the coast, to proceed with their land and naval forces, with all expedition, to Sandy Hook, and there await further advices; should they learn, however, that the expedition under Sir Henry Clinton had returned from the South to New York, they were to proceed to Rhode Island.

General Arnold was at this time in Philadelphia, and his connection with subsequent events requires a few words concerning his career, daily becoming more perplexed. He had again petitioned Congress on the subject of his accounts. The Board of Treasury had made a report far short of his wishes. He had appealed, and his appeal, together with all the documents connected with the case, was referred to a committee of three. The old doubts and difficulties continued: there was no prospect of a speedy settlement; he was in extremity. The French minister, M. de Luzerne, was at hand; a generous-spirited man who had manifested admiration of his military character. To him Arnold now repaired in his exigency; made a passionate representation of the hardships of his case; the inveterate hostility he had experienced from Pennsylvania; the ingratitude of his country; the disorder brought into his private affairs by

the war, and the necessity he should be driven to of abandoning his profession, unless he could borrow a sum equal to the amount of his debts. Such a loan, he intimated, it might be the interest of the king of France to grant, thereby securing the attachment and gratitude of an American general of his rank and influence.

The French minister was too much of a diplomatist not to understand the bearing of the intimation, but he shrank from it, observing that the service required would degrade both parties.

"When the envoy of a foreign power," said he, "gives, or if you will, lends money, it is ordinarily to corrupt those who receive it, and to make them the creatures of the sovereign whom he serves; or rather, he corrupts without persuading; he buys and does not secure. But the league entered into between the king and the United States, is the work of justice and of the wisest policy. It has for its basis a reciprocal interest and good-will. In the mission with which I am charged, my true glory consists in fulfilling it without intrigue or cabal; without resorting to any secret practices, and by the force alone of the conditions of the alliance."

M. de Luzerne endeavored to soften this repulse and reproof, by complimenting Arnold on the splendor of his past career, and by alluding to the field of glory still before him; but the pressure of debts was not to be lightened by compliments, and Arnold retired from the interview, a mortified and desperate man.

He was in this mood when he heard of the expected arrival of aid from France, and the talk of an active campaign. It seemed as if his military ambition was once more aroused. To General Schuyler, who was about to visit the camp as one of the committee, he wrote on the 25th of May, expressing a determination to rejoin the army, although his wounds still made it painful to walk or ride, and intimated, that, in his present condition, the command at West Point would be best suited to him.

In reply, General Schuyler wrote from Morristown, June 2d, that he had put Arnold's letter into Washington's hands, and added: "He expressed a desire to do whatever was agreeable to you: dwelt on your abilities, your merits, your sufferings, and on the well-earned claims you have on your country, and intimated, that as soon as his arrangements for the campaign should take place, he would properly consider you."

In the meantime, the army with which Washington was to coöperate in the projected attack upon New York, was so reduced by the departure of troops whose term had expired, and the tardiness in furnishing recruits, that it did not amount quite to four thousand rank and file, fit for duty. Among these was a prevalent discontent. Their pay was five months in arrear; if now paid, it would be in Continental currency, without allowance for depreciation, consequently, almost worthless for present purposes.

A long interval of scarcity and several days of actual famine, brought matters to a crisis. On the 15th of May, in the dusk of the evening, two regiments of the Connecticut line assembled on their parade by beat of drum, and declared their intention to march home bag and baggage, "or, at best, to gain subsistence at the point of the bayonet." Colonel Meigs, while endeavoring to suppress the mutiny, was struck by one of the soldiers. Some officers of the Pennsylvania line came to his assistance, parading their regiments. Every argument and expostulation was used with the mutineers. They were reminded of their past good conduct, of the noble objects for which they were contending, and of the future indemnifications promised by Congress. Their answer was, that their sufferings were too great to be allayed by promises, in which they had little faith; they wanted present relief, and some present substantial recompense for their services.

It was with difficulty they could be prevailed upon to return to their huts. Indeed, a few turned out a second time, with their packs, and were not to be pacified. These were arrested and confined.

This mutiny, Washington declared, had given him infinitely more concern than anything that had ever happened, especially as he had no means of paying the troops excepting in Continental money, which, said he, "is evidently impracticable from the immense quantity it would require to pay them as much as would make up

the depreciation." His uneasiness was increased by finding that printed handbills were secretly disseminated in his camp by the enemy, containing addresses to the soldiery, persuading them to desert.*

In this alarming state of destitution, Washington looked around anxiously for bread for his famishing troops. New York, Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, were what he termed his "flour country." Virginia was sufficiently tasked to supply the South. New York, by legislative coercion, had already given all that she could spare from the subsistence of her inhabitants. Jersey was exhausted by the long residence of the army. Maryland had made great exertions, and might still do something more, and Delaware might contribute handsomely, in proportion to her extent: but Pennsylvania was now the chief dependence, for that State was represented to be full of flour. Washington's letter of the 16th of December, to President Reed, had obtained temporary relief from that quarter; he now wrote to him a second time, and still more earnestly, "Every idea you can form of our distresses, will fall short of the reality. There is such a combination of circumstances to exhaust the patience of the soldiery, that it begins at length to be worn out, and we see in every line of the army, features of mutiny and sedition. All our departments, all our operations, are at a stand, and unless a system very different

* Letter to the President of Cong., May 27. Sparks, vii. 54.

from that which has a long time prevailed be immediately adopted throughout the States, our affairs must soon become desperate beyond the possibility of recovery."

Nothing discouraged Washington more than the lethargy that seemed to deaden the public mind. He speaks of it with a degree of despondency scarcely ever before exhibited. "I have almost ceased to hope. The country is in such a state of insensibility and indifference to its interests that I dare not flatter myself with any change for the better." And again, "The present juncture is so interesting, that if it does not produce corresponding exertions, it will be a proof that motives of honor, public good, and even self-preservation, have lost their influence on our minds. This is a decisive moment; one of the most, I will go further, and say, *the* most important America has seen. The court of France has made a glorious effort for our deliverance, and if we disappoint its intentions by our supineness, we must become contemptible in the eyes of all mankind, nor can we after that venture to confide that our allies will persist in an attempt to establish what, it will appear, we want inclination or ability to assist them in." With these and similar observations, he sought to rouse President Reed to extraordinary exertions. "This is a time," writes he, "to hazard and to take a tone of energy and decision. All parties but the disaffected will acquiesce in the necessity and give it their support." He urges Reed to

press upon the Legislature of Pennsylvania the policy of investing its executive with plenipotentiary powers. "I should then," writes he, "expect everything from your ability and zeal. This is no time for formality or ceremony. The crisis in every point of view is extraordinary, and extraordinary expedients are necessary. I am decided in this opinion."

His letter procured relief for the army from the legislature, and a resolve empowering the president and council, during its recess, to declare martial law, should circumstances render it expedient. "This," observes Reed, "gives us a power of doing what may be necessary without attending to the ordinary course of law, and we shall endeavor to exercise it with prudence and moderation." *

In like manner Washington endeavored to rouse the dormant fire of Congress, and impart to it his own indomitable energy. "Certain I am," writes he to a member of that body, "unless Congress speak in a more decisive tone, unless they are vested with powers by the several States, competent to the purposes of war, or assume them as matters of right, and they and the States respectively act with more energy than they have hitherto done, that our cause is lost. We can no longer drudge on in the old way. By ill-timing the adoption of measures, by delays in the execution of them, or by unwarrantable jealousies, we incur enormous expenses and

* Sparks, *Corr. of the Rev.*, vol. ii. p. 466.

derive no benefit from them. One State will comply with a requisition of Congress; another neglects to do it; a third executes it by halves; and all differ, either in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up-hill; and, while such a system as the present one, or rather want of one, prevails, we shall ever be unable to apply our strength or resources to any advantage — I see one head gradually changing into thirteen, I see one army branching into thirteen, which, instead of looking up to Congress as the supreme controlling power of the United States, are considering themselves dependent on their respective States. In a word, I see the powers of Congress declining too fast for the consideration and respect which are due to them as the great representative body of America, and I am fearful of the consequences." *

At this juncture came official intelligence from the South, to connect which with the general course of events, requires a brief notice of the operations of Sir Henry Clinton in that quarter.

* Letter to Joseph Jones. Sparks, vii. 67.

CHAPTER V.

SIEGE OF CHARLESTON CONTINUED.—BRITISH SHIPS ENTER THE HARBOR.—BRITISH TROOPS MARCH FROM SAVANNAH.—TARLETON AND HIS DRAGOONS.—HIS BRUSH WITH COLONEL WASHINGTON.—CHARLESTON REINFORCED BY WOODFORD.—TARLETON'S EXPLOITS AT MONK'S CORNER.—AT LANEAU'S FERRY.—SIR HENRY CLINTON REINFORCED.—CHARLESTON CAPITULATES.—AFFAIR OF TARLETON AND BUFORD ON THE WAXHAW.—SIR HENRY CLINTON EMBARKS FOR NEW YORK.

N a preceding chapter we left the British fleet under Admiral Arbuthnot, preparing to force its way into the harbor of Charleston. Several days elapsed before the ships were able, by taking out their guns, provisions, and water, and availing themselves of wind and tide, to pass the bar. They did so on the 20th of March, with but slight opposition from several galleys. Commodore Whipple, then, seeing the vast superiority of their force, made a second retrograde move, stationing some of his ships in Cooper River, and sinking the rest at its mouth so as to prevent the enemy from running up that river, and cutting off communication with the country on the east: the crews and heavy cannon were landed to aid in the defense of the town.

The reinforcements expected from the North were not

yet arrived; the militia of the State did not appear at Governor Rutledge's command, and other reliances were failing. "Many of the North Carolina militia whose terms have expired leave us to-day," writes Lincoln to Washington, on the 20th of March. "They cannot be persuaded to remain longer, though the enemy are in our neighborhood."*

At this time the reinforcements which Sir Henry Clinton had ordered from Savannah were marching toward the Cambayee under Brigadier-general Patterson. On his flanks moved Major Ferguson with a corps of riflemen, and Major Cochrane with the infantry of the British legion, two brave and enterprising officers. It was a toilsome march, through swamps and difficult passes. Being arrived in the neighborhood of Port Royal, where Tarleton had succeeded, though indifferently, in remounting his dragoons, Patterson sent orders to that officer to join him. Tarleton hastened to obey the order. His arrival was timely. The Carolina militia having heard that all the British horses had perished at sea, made an attack on the front of General Patterson's force, supposing it to be without cavalry. To their surprise, Tarleton charged them with his dragoons, routed them, took several prisoners, and, what was more acceptable, a number of horses, some of the militia, he says, "being accoutred as cavaliers."

* *Correspondence of the Rev.*, vol. ii. p. 419.

Tarleton had soon afterwards to encounter a worthy antagonist in Colonel William Washington, the same cavalry officer who had distinguished himself at Trenton, and was destined to distinguish himself still more in this Southern campaign. He is described as being six feet in height, broad, stout, and corpulent. Bold in the field, careless in the camp, kind to his soldiers, harassing to his enemies, gay and good-humored, with an upright heart and a generous hand, a universal favorite. He was now at the head of a body of continental cavalry, consisting of his own and Bland's light horse, and Pulaski's hussars. A brush took place in the neighborhood of Rantoul's Bridge. Colonel Washington had the advantage, took several prisoners, and drove back the dragoons of the British legion, but durst not pursue them for want of infantry.*

On the 7th of April, Brigadier-general Woodford with seven hundred Virginia troops, after a forced march of five hundred miles in thirty days, crossed from the east side of Cooper River, by the only passage now open, and threw himself into Charleston. It was a timely reinforcement, and joyfully welcomed; for the garrison, when in greatest force, amounted to a little more than two thousand regulars and one thousand North Carolina militia.

About the same time Admiral Arbuthnot, in the *Roe-*

* Gordon, vol. iii. p. 352; see also Tarleton, *Hist. Campaign*, p. 8.

buck, passed Sullivan's Island, with a fresh southerly breeze, at the head of a squadron of seven armed vessels and two transports. "It was a magnificent spectacle, satisfactory to the royalists," writes the admiral. The whigs regarded it with a rueful eye. Colonel Pinckney opened a heavy cannonade from the batteries of Fort Moultrie. The ships thundered in reply, and clouds of smoke were raised, under the cover of which they slipped by, with no greater loss than twenty-seven men killed and wounded. A store-ship which followed the squadron ran aground, was set on fire and abandoned, and subsequently blew up. The ships took a position near Fort Johnston, just without the range of the shot from the American batteries. After the passage of the ships, Colonel Pinckney and a part of the garrison withdrew from Fort Moultrie.

The enemy had by this time completed his first parallel, and the town being almost entirely invested by sea and land, received a joint summons from the British general and admiral to surrender. "Sixty days have passed," writes Lincoln in reply, "since it has been known that your intentions against this town were hostile, in which time has been afforded to abandon it, but duty and inclination point to the propriety of supporting it to the last extremity."

The British batteries were now opened. The siege was carried on deliberately by regular parallels, and on a scale of magnitude scarcely warranted by the moderate

strength of the place. A great object with the besieged was to keep open the channel of communication with the country by the Cooper River, the last that remained by which they could receive reinforcements and supplies, or could retreat, if necessary. For this purpose, Governor Rutledge, leaving the town in the care of Lieutenant-governor Gadsden, and one half of the executive council, set off with the other half, and endeavored to rouse the militia between the Cooper and Santee rivers. His success was extremely limited. Two militia posts were established by him, one between these rivers, the other at a ferry on the Santee; some regular troops, also, had been detached by Lincoln to throw up works about nine miles above the town, on the Wando, a branch of Cooper River, and at Lempriere's Point; and Brigadier-general Huger,* with a force of militia and continental cavalry, including those of Colonel William Washington, was stationed at Monk's Corner, about thirty miles above Charleston, to guard the passes at the head waters of Cooper River.

Sir Henry Clinton, when proceeding with his second parallel, detached Lieutenant-colonel Webster with fourteen hundred men to break up these posts. The most distant one was that of Huger's cavalry at Monk's Corner. The surprisal of this was intrusted to Tarleton, who, with his dragoons, was in Webster's advanced guard. He was

* Pronounced Hugee—of French Huguenot descent.

to be seconded by Major Patrick Ferguson with his rifle-men.

Ferguson was a fit associate for Tarleton, in hardy, scrambling, partisan enterprise; equally intrepid, and determined, but cooler and more open to impulses of humanity. He was the son of an eminent Scotch judge, had entered the army at an early age, and served in the German wars. The British extolled him as superior to the American Indians, in the use of the rifle; in short, as being the best marksman living. He had invented one which could be loaded at the breech and discharged seven times in a minute. It had been used with effect by his corps. Washington, according to British authority, had owed his life at the battle of Germantown, solely to Ferguson's ignorance of his person, having repeatedly been within reach of the major's unerring rifle.*

On the evening of the 13th of April, Tarleton moved with the van toward Monk's Corner. A night march had been judged the most advisable. It was made in profound silence and by unfrequented roads. In the course of the march, a negro was descried attempting to avoid notice. He was seized. A letter was found on him from an officer in Huger's camp, from which Tarleton learned something of its situation and the distribution of the troops. A few dollars gained the services of the negro as a guide. The surprisal of General Huger's camp was

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 52.

complete. Several officers and men who attempted to defend themselves, were killed or wounded. General Huger, Colonel Washington, with many others, officers and men, escaped in the darkness, to the neighboring swamps. One hundred officers, dragoons, and hussars, were taken, with about four hundred horses and near fifty wagons, laden with arms, clothing, and ammunition.

Biggin's Bridge on Cooper River was likewise secured, and the way opened for Colonel Webster to advance nearly to the head of the passes, in such a manner as to shut up Charleston entirely.

In the course of the maraud which generally accompanies a surprisal of the kind, several dragoons of the British legion broke into a house in the neighborhood of Monk's Corner, and maltreated and attempted violence upon ladies residing there. The ladies escaped to Monk's Corner, where they were protected, and a carriage furnished to convey them to a place of safety. The dragoons were apprehended and brought to Monk's Corner, where by this time Colonel Webster had arrived. Major Ferguson, we are told, was for putting the dragoons to instant death, but Colonel Webster did not think his powers warranted such a measure. "They were sent to head-quarters," adds the historian, "and, I believe, afterwards tried and whipped." *

We gladly record one instance in which the atrocities

* Stedman, ii. 183.

which disgraced this invasion met with some degree of punishment; and we honor the rough soldier, Ferguson, for the fiat of "instant death," with which he would have requited the most infamous and dastardly outrage that brutalizes warfare.

During the progress of the siege, General Lincoln held repeated councils of war, in which he manifested a disposition to evacuate the place. This measure was likewise urged by General Du Portail, who had penetrated, by secret ways, into the town. The inhabitants, however, in an agony of alarm, implored Lincoln not to abandon them to the mercies of an infuriated and licentious soldiery, and the general, easy and kind-hearted, yielded to their entreaties.

The American cavalry had gradually reassembled on the north of the Santee, under Colonel White of New Jersey, where they were joined by some militia infantry, and by Colonel William Washington, with such of his dragoons as had escaped at Monk's Corner. Cornwallis had committed the country between Cooper and Wando Rivers to Tarleton's charge, with orders to be continually on the move with the cavalry and infantry of the legion; to watch over the landing-places; obtain intelligence from the town, the Santee River, and the back country, and to burn such stores as might fall into his hands, rather than risk their being retaken by the enemy.

Hearing of the fortuitous assemblage of American troops, Tarleton came suddenly upon them by surprise

at Laneau's Ferry. It was one of his bloody exploits. Five officers and thirty-six men were killed and wounded, and seven officers and six dragoons taken, with horses, arms, and equipments. Colonels White, Washington, and Jamieson, with other officers and men, threw themselves into the river, and escaped by swimming; while some, who followed their example, perished.

The arrival of a reinforcement of three thousand men from New York enabled Sir Henry to throw a powerful detachment, under Lord Cornwallis, to the east of Cooper River, to complete the investment of the town and cut off all retreat. Fort Moultrie surrendered. The batteries of the third parallel were opened upon the town. They were so near, that the Hessian yagers, or sharpshooters, could pick off the garrison while at their guns or on the parapets. This fire was kept up for two days. The besiegers crossed the canal; pushed up a double sap to the inside of the abatis, and prepared to make an assault by sea and land.

All hopes of successful defense were at an end. The works were in ruins; the guns almost all dismounted; the garrison exhausted with fatigue, the provisions nearly consumed. The inhabitants, dreading the horrors of an assault, joined in a petition to General Lincoln, and prevailed upon him to offer a surrender on terms which had already been offered and rejected. These terms were still granted, and the capitulation was signed on the 12th of May. The garrison were allowed some of the honors

of war. They were to march out and deposit their arms, between the canal and the works, but the drums were not to beat a British march nor the colors to be uncased. The continental troops and seamen were allowed their baggage, but were to remain prisoners of war. The officers of the army and navy were to retain their servants, swords, and pistols, and their baggage unsearched; and were permitted to sell their horses; but not to remove them out of the town. The citizens and the militia were to be considered prisoners on parole; the latter to be permitted to return home, and both to be protected in person and property as long as they kept their parole. Among the prisoners were the lieutenant-governor and five of the council.

The loss of the British in the siege was seventy-six killed and one hundred and eighty-nine wounded; that of the Americans nearly the same. The prisoners taken by the enemy, exclusive of the sailors, amounted to five thousand six hundred and eighteen men; comprising every male adult in the city. The continental troops did not exceed two thousand, five hundred of whom were in the hospital; the rest were citizens and militia.

Sir Henry Clinton considered the fall of Charleston decisive of the fate of South Carolina. To complete the subjugation of the country, he planned three expeditions into the interior. One, under Lieutenant-colonel Brown, was to move up the Savannah River to Augusta, on the borders of Georgia. Another, under Lieutenant-colonel

Cruger, was to proceed up the southwest side of the Santee River to the district of Ninety-Six,* a fertile and salubrious region, between the Savannah and the Saluda rivers: while a third, under Cornwallis, was to cross the Santee, march up the northeast bank, and strike at a corps of troops under Colonel Buford, which were retreating to North Carolina with artillery and a number of wagons, laden with arms, ammunition, and clothing.

Colonel Buford, in fact, had arrived too late for the relief of Charleston, and was now making a retrograde move; he had come on with three hundred and eighty troops of the Virginia line, and two field-pieces, and had been joined by Colonel Washington with a few of his cavalry that had survived the surprisal by Tarleton. As Buford was moving with celerity, and had the advantage of distance, Cornwallis detached Tarleton in pursuit of him, with one hundred and seventy dragoons, a hundred mounted infantry and a three-pounder. The bold partisan pushed forward with his usual ardor and rapidity. The weather was sultry, many of his horses gave out through fatigue and heat; he pressed others by the way, leaving behind such of his troops as could not keep pace with him. After a day and night of forced march, he arrived about dawn at Rugeley's Mills. Buford, he was told, was about twenty miles in advance of him, pressing on with all diligence to join another corps of Americans.

* So called in early times from being ninety-six miles from the principal town of the Cherokee nation.

Tarleton continued his march; the horses of the three pounder were knocked up and unable to proceed; his wearied troops were continually dropping in the rear. Still he urged forward, anxious to overtake Buford before he could form a junction with the force he was seeking. To detain him he sent forward Captain Kinlock of his legion with a flag, and the following letter:—

"SIR,—Resistance being vain, to prevent the effusion of blood, I make offers which can never be repeated. You are now almost encompassed by a corps of seven hundred light troops on horseback; half of that number are infantry with cannons. Earl Cornwallis is likewise within reach with nine British regiments. I warn you of the temerity of further inimical proceedings."

He concluded by offering the same conditions granted to the troops at Charleston; "if you are rash enough to reject them," added he, "the blood be upon your head."

Kinlock overtook Colonel Buford in full march on the banks of the Waxhaw, a stream on the border of North Carolina, and delivered the summons. The colonel read the letter without coming to a halt, detaining the flag for some time in conversation, and then returned the following note:—

"SIR,—I reject your proposals, and shall defend myself to the last extremity.

"I have the honor." etc.

Tarleton, who had never ceased to press forward, came upon Buford's rear-guard about three o'clock in the afternoon, and captured a sergeant and four dragoons. Buford had not expected so prompt an approach of the enemy. He hastily drew up his men in order of battle, in an open wood, on the right of the road. His artillery and wagons, which were in the advance escorted by part of his infantry, were ordered to continue on their march.

There appears to have been some confusion on the part of the Americans, and they had an impetuous foe to deal with. Before they were well prepared for action they were attacked in front and on both flanks by cavalry and mounted infantry. Tarleton, who advanced at the head of thirty chosen dragoons and some infantry, states that when within fifty paces of the continental infantry, they presented, but he heard their officers command them to retain their fire until the British cavalry were nearer. It was not until the latter were within ten yards that there was a partial discharge of musketry. Several of the dragoons suffered by this fire. Tarleton himself was unhorsed, but his troopers rode on. The American battalion was broken; most of the men threw down their arms and begged for quarter, but were cut down without mercy. One hundred and thirteen were slain on the spot, and one hundred and fifty so mangled and maimed that they could not be removed. Colonel Buford and a few of the cavalry escaped, as did about a hun-

dred of the infantry, who were with the baggage in the advance. Fifty prisoners were all that were in a condition to be carried off by Tarleton as trophies of this butchery.

The whole British loss was two officers and three privates killed, and one officer and fourteen privates wounded. What, then, could excuse this horrible carnage of an almost prostrate enemy? We give Tarleton's own excuse for it. It commenced, he says, at the time he was dismounted, and before he could mount another horse; and his cavalry were exasperated by a report that he was slain. Cornwallis apparently accepted this excuse, for he approved of his conduct in the expedition, and recommended him as worthy of some distinguished mark of royal favor. The world at large, however, have not been so easily satisfied, and the massacre at the Waxhaw has remained a sanguinary stain on the reputation of that impetuous soldier.

The two other detachments which had been sent out by Clinton, met with nothing but submission. The people in general, considering resistance hopeless, accepted the proffered protection, and conformed to its humiliating terms. One class of the population in this colony seems to have regarded the invaders as deliverers. "All the negroes," writes Tarleton, "men, women, and children, upon the appearance of any detachment of king's troops, thought themselves absolved from all respect to their American masters, and entirely released from ser-

vitude. They quitted the plantations and followed the army." *

Sir Henry now persuaded himself that South Carolina was subdued, and proceeded to station garrisons in various parts, to maintain it in subjection. In the fullness of his confidence, he issued a proclamation on the 3d of June, discharging all the military prisoners from their paroles after the 20th of the month, excepting those captured in Fort Moultrie and Charleston. All thus released from their parole were reinstated in the rights and duties of British subjects; but, at the same time, they were bound to take an active part in support of the government hitherto opposed by them. Thus the protection afforded them while prisoners was annulled by an arbitrary fiat—neutrality was at an end. All were to be ready to take up arms at a moment's notice. Those who had families were to form a militia for home defense. Those who had none, were to serve with the royal forces. All who should neglect to return to their allegiance, or should refuse to take up arms against the independence of their country were to be considered as rebels and treated accordingly.

Having struck a blow, which, as he conceived, was to insure the subjugation of the South, Sir Henry embarked for New York on the 5th of June, with a part of his forces, leaving the residue under the command of Lord Cornwallis, who was to carry the war into North Carolina, and thence into Virginia.

* Tarleton's *Hist. of Campaign*, p. 89.

CHAPTER VI.

KNYPHAUSEN MARAUDS THE JERSEYS.—SACKING OF CONNECTICUT FARMS.—MURDER OF MRS. CALDWELL.—ARRIVAL AND MOVEMENTS OF SIR HENRY CLINTON.—SPRINGFIELD BURNT.—THE JERSEYS EVACUATED.

HANDBILL published by the British authorities in New York, reached Washington's camp on the 1st of June, and made known the surrender of Charleston. A person from Amboy reported, moreover, that on the 30th of May he had seen one hundred sail of vessels enter Sandy Hook. These might bring Sir Henry Clinton with the whole or part of his force. In that case, flushed with his recent success, he might proceed immediately up the Hudson, and make an attempt upon West Point, in the present distressed condition of the garrison. So thinking, Washington wrote to General Howe, who commanded that important post, to put him on his guard, and took measures to have him furnished with supplies.

The report concerning the fleet proved to be erroneous, but on the 6th of June came a new alarm. The enemy, it was said, were actually landing in force at Elizabethtown Point, to carry fire and sword into the Jerseys!

It was even so. Knyphausen, through spies and emissaries, had received exaggerated accounts of the recent outbreak in Washington's camp, and of the general discontent among the people of New Jersey; and was persuaded that a sudden show of military protection, following up the news of the capture of Charleston, would produce a general desertion among Washington's troops, and rally back the inhabitants of the Jerseys to their allegiance to the crown.

In this belief he projected a descent into the Jerseys with about five thousand men, and some light artillery, who were to cross in divisions in the night of the 5th of June from Staten Island to Elizabethtown Point.

The first division, led by Brigadier-general Sterling, actually landed before dawn of the 6th, and advanced as silently as possible. The heavy and measured tramp of the troops, however, caught the ear of an American sentinel stationed at a fork where the roads from the old and new point joined. He challenged the dimly descried mass as it approached, and receiving no answer, fired into it. That shot wounded General Sterling in the thigh, and ultimately proved mortal. The wounded general was carried back, and Knyphausen took his place.

This delayed the march until sunrise, and gave time for the troops of the Jersey line, under Colonel Elias Dayton, stationed in Elizabethtown, to assemble. They were too weak in numbers, however, to withstand the enemy, but retreated in good order, skirmishing occa-

sionally. The invading force passed through the village; in the advance, a squadron of dragoons of Simcoe's regiment of Queen's Rangers, with drawn swords and glittering helmets, followed by British and Hessian infantry.*

Signal guns and signal fires were rousing the country. The militia and yeomanry armed themselves with such weapons as were at hand, and hastened to their alarm posts. The enemy took the old road, by what was called Galloping Hill, toward the village of Connecticut Farms; fired upon from behind walls and thickets by the hasty levies of the country.

At Connecticut Farms, the retreating troops under Dayton fell in with the Jersey brigade, under General Maxwell, and, a few militia joining them, the Americans were enabled to make some stand, and even to hold the enemy in check. The latter, however, brought up several field-pieces, and being reinforced by a second division which had crossed from Staten Island some time after the first, compelled the Americans again to retreat. Some of the enemy, exasperated at the unexpected opposition they had met with throughout their march, and pretending that the inhabitants of this village had fired upon them from their windows, began to pillage and set fire to the houses. It so happened that to this village the Rev. James Caldwell, "the rousing gospel preacher," had removed his family as to a place of safety, after his church

* Passages in the History of Elizabethtown, Capt. W. C. De Hart.

at Elizabethtown had been burnt down by the British in January. On the present occasion he had retreated with the regiment to which he was chaplain. His wife, however, remained at the parsonage with her two youngest children, confiding in the protection of Providence, and the humanity of the enemy.

When the sacking of the village took place, she retired with her children into a back room of the house. Her infant of eight months was in the arms of an attendant; she herself was seated on the side of a bed holding a child of three years by the hand, and was engaged in prayer. All was terror and confusion in the village; when suddenly a musket was discharged in at the window. Two balls struck her in the breast, and she fell dead on the floor. The parsonage and church were set on fire, and it was with difficulty her body was rescued from the flames.

In the meantime Knyphausen was pressing on with his main force towards Morristown. The booming of alarm guns had roused the country; every valley was pouring out its yeomanry. Two thousand were said to be already in arms below the mountains.

Within half a mile of Springfield, Knyphausen halted to reconnoiter. That village, through which passes the road to Springfield, had been made the American rallying-point. It stands at the foot of what are called the Short Hills, on the west side of Rahway River, which runs in front of it. On the bank of the river, General

Maxwell's Jersey brigade and the militia of the neighborhood were drawn up to dispute the passage; and on the Short Hills in the rear was Washington with the main body of his forces, not mutinous and in confusion, but all in good order, strongly posted, and ready for action.

Washington had arrived and taken his position that afternoon, prepared to withstand an encounter, though not to seek one. All night his camp fires lighted up the Short Hills, and he remained on the alert, expecting to be assailed in the morning; but in the morning no enemy was to be seen.

Knyphausen had experienced enough to convince him that he had been completely misinformed as to the disposition of the Jersey people and of the army. Disappointed as to the main objects of his enterprise, he had retreated under cover of the night, to the place of his debarkation, intending to recross to Staten Island immediately.

In the camp at the Short Hills was the Reverend James Caldwell, whose home had been laid desolate. He was still ignorant of the event, but had passed a night of great anxiety, and, procuring the protection of a flag, hastened back in the morning to Connecticut Farms. He found the village in ashes, and his wife a mangled corpse!

In the course of the day Washington received a letter from Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who was reconnoitering in the neighborhood of Elizabethtown Point. "I

have seen the enemy," writes he. "Those in view I calculate at about three thousand. There may be, and probably are, enough others out of sight. They have sent all their horses to the other side except about fifty or sixty. Their baggage has also been sent across, and their wounded. It is not ascertained that any of their infantry have passed on the other side. . . . . The present movement may be calculated to draw us down and betray us into an action. They may have desisted from their intention of passing till night, for fear of our falling upon their rear."

As Washington was ignorant of the misinformation which had beguiled Knyphausen into this enterprise, the movements of that general, his sudden advance, and as sudden retreat, were equally inexplicable. At one time, he supposed his inroad to be a mere foraging incursion; then, as Hamilton had suggested, a device to draw him down from his stronghold into the plain, where the superiority of the British force would give them the advantage.

Knyphausen, in fact, had been impeded in crossing his troops to Staten Island, by the low tide and deep muddy shore, which rendered it difficult to embark the cavalry; and by a destructive fire kept up by militia posted along the river banks, and the adjacent woods. In the meanwhile he had time to reflect on the ridicule that would await him in New York, should his expedition prove fruitless, and end in what might appear a precipitate

flight. This produced indecision of mind, and induced him to recall the troops which had already crossed, and which were necessary, he said, to protect his rear.

For several days he lingered with his troops at Elizabethtown and the Point beyond; obliging Washington to exercise unremitting vigilance for the safety of the Jerseys and of the Hudson. It was a great satisfaction to the latter to be joined by Major Henry Lee, who with his troop of horse had hastened on from the vicinity of Philadelphia, where he had recently been stationed.

In the meantime, the tragical fate of Mrs. Caldwell produced almost as much excitement throughout the country as that which had been caused in a preceding year, by the massacre of Miss McCrea. She was connected with some of the first people of New Jersey; was winning in person and character, and universally beloved. Knyphausen was vehemently assailed in the American papers, as if responsible for this atrocious act. The enemy, however, attributed her death to a random shot, discharged in a time of confusion, or to the vengeance of a menial who had a deadly pique against her husband; but the popular voice persisted in execrating it as the willful and wanton act of a British soldier.

On the 17th of June the fleet from the South actually arrived in the bay of New York, and Sir Henry Clinton landed his troops on Staten Island; but almost immediately reëmbarked them, as if meditating an expedition up the river.

Fearing for the safety of West Point, Washington set off on the 21st June, with the main body of his troops, towards Pompton; while General Greene, with Maxwell and Stark's brigades, Lee's dragoons and the militia of the neighborhood, remained encamped on the Short Hills, to cover the country and protect the stores at Morristown.

Washington's movements were slow and wary, unwilling to be far from Greene until better informed of the designs of the enemy. At Rockaway Bridge, about eleven miles beyond Morristown, he received word on the 23d, that the enemy were advancing from Elizabethtown against Springfield. Supposing the military depot at Morristown to be their ultimate object, he detached a brigade to the assistance of Greene, and fell back five or six miles, so as to be in supporting distance of him.

The reëmbarkation of the troops at Staten Island had, in fact, been a stratagem of Sir Henry Clinton to divert the attention of Washington, and enable Knyphausen to carry out the enterprise which had hitherto hung fire. No sooner did the latter ascertain that the American commander-in-chief had moved off with his main force towards the Highlands, than he sallied from Elizabethtown five thousand strong, with a large body of cavalry, and fifteen or twenty pieces of artillery; hoping not merely to destroy the public stores at Morristown, but to get possession of those difficult hills and defiles, among which Washington's army had been so securely posted,

and which constituted the strength of that part of the country.

It was early on the morning of the 23d that Knyphausen pushed forward toward Springfield. Besides the main road which passes directly through the village toward Morristown, there is another, north of it, called the Vauxhall road, crossing several small streams, the confluence of which forms the Rahway. These two roads unite beyond the village in the principal pass of the Short Hills. The enemy's troops advanced rapidly in two compact columns, the right one by the Vauxhall road, the other by the main or direct road. General Greene was stationed among the Short Hills, about a mile above the town. His troops were distributed at various posts, for there were many passes to guard.

At five o'clock in the morning, signal-guns gave notice of the approach of the enemy. The drums beat to arms throughout the camp. The troops were hastily called in from their posts among the mountain passes, and preparations were made to defend the village.

Major Lee, with his dragoons and a picket-guard, was posted on the Vauxhall road, to check the right column of the enemy in its advance. Colonel Dayton, with his regiment of New Jersey militia, was to check the left column on the main road. Colonel Angel of Rhode Island, with about two hundred picked men, and a piece of artillery, was to defend a bridge over the Rahway, a little west of the town. Colonel Shreve, stationed with his

regiment at a second bridge over a branch of the Rahway east of the town, was to cover, if necessary, the retreat of Colonel Angel. Those parts of Maxwell and Stark's brigades which were not thus detached, were drawn up on high grounds in the rear of the town, having the militia on their flanks.

There was some sharp fighting at a bridge on the Vauxhall road, where Major Lee with his dragoons and picket-guard held the right column at bay ; a part of the column, however, forded the stream above the bridge, gained a commanding position, and obliged Lee to retire.

The left column met with similar opposition from Dayton and his Jersey regiment. None showed more ardor in the fight than Caldwell the chaplain. The image of his murdered wife was before his eyes. Finding the men in want of wadding, he galloped to the Presbyterian church and brought thence a quantity of Watts' psalm and hymn books, which he distributed for the purpose among the soldiers. "Now," cried he, "put Watts into them, boys!"

The severest fighting of the day was at the bridge over the Rahway. For upwards of half an hour Colonel Angel defended it with his handful of men against a vastly superior force. One fourth of his men were either killed or disabled : the loss of the enemy was still more severe. Angel was at length compelled to retire. He did so in good order, carrying off his wounded, and making his

way through the village to the bridge beyond it. Here his retreat was bravely covered by Colonel Shreve, but he too was obliged to give way before the overwhelming force of the enemy, and join the brigades of Maxwell and Stark upon the hill.

General Greene, finding his front too much extended for his small force, and that he was in danger of being outflanked on the left by the column pressing forward on the Vauxhall road, took post with his main body on the first range of hills, where the roads were brought near to a point, and passed between him and the height occupied by Stark and Maxwell. He then threw out a detachment which checked the further advance of the right column of the enemy along the Vauxhall road, and secured that pass through the Short Hills. Feeling himself now strongly posted, he awaited with confidence the expected attempt of the enemy to gain the height. No such attempt was made. The resistance already experienced, especially at the bridge, and the sight of militia gathering from various points, dampened the ardor of the hostile commander. He saw that, should he persist in pushing for Morristown, he would have to fight his way through a country abounding with difficult passes, every one of which would be obstinately disputed; and that the enterprise, even if successful, might cost too much, besides taking him too far from New York, at a time when a French armament might be expected.

Before the brigade detached by Washington arrived at

the scene of action, therefore, the enemy had retreated. Previous to their retreat they wreaked upon Springfield the same vengeance they had inflicted on Connecticut Farms. The whole village, excepting four houses, was reduced to ashes. Their second retreat was equally ignoble with their first. They were pursued and harassed the whole way to Elizabethtown by light scouting parties and by the militia and yeomanry of the country, exasperated by the sight of the burning village. Lee, too, came upon their rear-guard with his dragoons, captured a quantity of stores abandoned by them in the hurry of retreat, and made prisoners of several refugees.

It was sunset when the enemy reached Elizabethtown. During the night they passed over to Staten Island by their bridge of boats. By six o'clock in the morning all had crossed, and the bridge had been removed—and the State of New Jersey, so long harassed by the campaignings of either army, was finally evacuated by the enemy. It had proved a school of war to the American troops. The incessant marchings and counter-marchings; the rude encampments; the exposures to all kinds of hardship and privation; the alarms; the stratagems; the rough encounters and adventurous enterprises of which this had been the theatre for the last three or four years, had rendered the patriot soldier hardy, adroit, and long-suffering; had accustomed him to danger, inured him to discipline, and brought him nearly on a level with the European mercenary in the habitudes and usages of

arms, while he had the superior incitements of home, country, and independence. The ravaging incursions of the enemy had exasperated the most peace-loving parts of the country; made soldiers of the husbandmen, acquainted them with their own powers, and taught them that the foe was vulnerable. The recent ineffectual attempts of a veteran general to penetrate the fastnesses of Morristown, though at the head of a veteran force, "which would once have been deemed capable of sweeping the whole continent before it," was a lasting theme of triumph to the inhabitants; and it is still the honest boast among the people of Morris County, that "the enemy never were able to get a footing among our hills." At the same time the conflagration of villages, by which they sought to cover or revenge their repeated failures, and their precipitate retreat, harassed and insulted by half-disciplined militia, and a crude, rustic levy, formed an ignominious close to the British campaigns in the Jerseys.

CHAPTER VII.

WASHINGTON APPLIES TO THE STATE LEGISLATURES FOR AID.—SUBSCRIPTIONS OF THE LADIES OF PHILADELPHIA.—GATES APPOINTED TO COMMAND THE SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT.—FRENCH FLEET ARRIVES AT NEWPORT.—PREPARATION FOR A COMBINED MOVEMENT AGAINST NEW YORK.—ARNOLD OBTAINS COMMAND AT WEST POINT.—GREENE RESIGNS THE OFFICE OF QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.

PPREHENSIVE that the next move of the enemy would be up the Hudson, Washington resumed his measures for the security of West Point; moving towards the Highlands in the latter part of June. Circumstances soon convinced him that the enemy had no present intention of attacking that fortress, but merely menaced him at various points, to retard his operations, and oblige him to call out the militia; thereby interrupting agriculture, distressing the country, and rendering his cause unpopular. Having, therefore, caused the military stores in the Jerseys to be removed to more remote and secure places, he countermanded by letter the militia, which were marching to camp from Connecticut and Massachusetts.

He now exerted himself to the utmost to procure from the different State Legislatures their quotas and supplies

for the regular army. "The sparing system," said he, "has been tried until it has brought us to a crisis little less than desperate." This was the time by one great exertion to put an end to the war. The basis of everything was the completion of the continental battalions to their full establishment; otherwise, nothing decisive could be attempted, and this campaign, like all the former, must be chiefly defensive. He warned against those "indolent and narrow politicians, who, except at the moment of some signal misfortune, are continually crying, *all is well*, and who to save a little present expense, and avoid some temporary inconvenience, with no ill designs in the main, would protract the war, and risk the perdition of our liberties." *

The desired relief, however, had to be effected through the ramifications of general and State governments, and their committees. The operations were tardy and unproductive. Liberal contributions were made by individuals, a bank was established by the inhabitants of Philadelphia to facilitate the supplies of the army, and an association of ladies of that city raised by subscription between seven and eight thousand dollars, which were put at the disposition of Washington, to be laid out in such a manner as he might think "most honorable and gratifying to the brave old soldiers who had borne so great a share of the burden of the war."

* Letter to Governor Trumbull. Sparks, vii. 93.

The capture of General Lincoln at Charleston had left the Southern department without a commander-in-chief. As there were likely to be important military operations in that quarter, Washington had intended to recommend General Greene for the appointment. He was an officer on whose abilities, discretion, and disinterested patriotism he had the fullest reliance, and whom he had always found thoroughly disposed to act in unison with him in his general plan of carrying on the war. Congress, however, with unbecoming precipitancy, gave that important command to General Gates (June 13th), without waiting to consult Washington's views or wishes.

Gates, at the time, was on his estate in Virginia, and accepted the appointment with avidity, anticipating new triumphs. His old associate, General Lee, gave him an ominous caution at parting. "Beware that your Northern laurels do not change to Southern willows!"

On the 10th of July a French fleet, under the Chevalier de Ternay, arrived at Newport, in Rhode Island. It was composed of seven ships of the line, two frigates and two bombs, and convoyed transports on board of which there were upwards of five thousand troops. This was the first division of the forces promised by France, of which Lafayette had spoken. The second division had been detained at Brest for want of transports, but might soon be expected.

The Count de Rochambeau, lieutenant-general of the royal armies, was commander-in-chief of this auxiliary

force. He was a veteran, fifty-five years of age, who had early distinguished himself, when colonel of the regiment of Auvergne, and had gained laurels in various battles, especially that of Kloster Camp, of which he decided the success. Since then, he had risen from one post of honor to another, until intrusted with his present important command.*

Another officer of rank and distinction in this force, was Major-general the Marquis de Chastellux, a friend and relative of Lafayette, but much his senior, being now forty-six years of age. He was not only a soldier, but a man of letters, and one familiar with courts as well as camps.

Count Rochambeau's first despatch to Vergennes, the French Minister of State (July 16th) gave a discouraging picture of affairs. "Upon my arrival here," writes he, "the country was in consternation, the paper money had fallen to sixty for one, and even the government takes it up at forty for one. Washington had for a long time only three thousand men under his command. The arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette, and the announcement of succors from France, afforded some encouragement; but the tories, who were very numerous, gave out that it was only a temporary assistance, like that of Count D'Estaing. In describing to you our reception at this place, we shall show you the feeling of all the inhabitants of the continent. This town is of consider-

* Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, was born at Vendome, in France, 1725.

able size, and contains, like the rest, both whigs and tories. I landed with my staff, without troops; nobody appeared in the streets; those at the windows looked sad and depressed. I spoke to the principal persons of the place, and told them, as I wrote to General Washington, that this was merely the advanced guard of a greater force, and that the king was determined to support them with his whole power. In twenty-four hours their spirits rose, and last night all the streets, houses, and steeples were illuminated, in the midst of fire-works, and the greatest rejoicings. I am now here with a single company of grenadiers, until wood and straw shall have been collected; my camp is marked out, and I hope to have the troops landed to-morrow."

Still, however, there appears to have been a lingering feeling of disappointment in the public bosom. "The whigs are pleased," writes De Rochambeau, "but they say that the king ought to have sent twenty thousand men, and twenty ships to drive the enemy from New York; that the country was infallibly ruined; that it is impossible to find a recruit to send to General Washington's army, without giving him one hundred hard dollars to engage for six months' service, and they beseech His Majesty to assist them with all his strength. The war will be an expensive one; we pay even for our quarters, and for the land covered with the camp." *

* Sparks. *Writings of Washington*, vii. 504.

The troops were landed to the east of the town; their encampment was on a fine situation, and extended nearly across the island. Much was said of their gallant and martial appearance. There was the noted regiment of Auvergne, in command of which the Count de Rochambeau had first gained his laurels, but which was now commanded by his son the viscount, thirty years of age. A legion of six hundred men also was especially admired; it was commanded by the Duke de Lauzun (Lauzun-Biron), who had gained reputation in the preceding year by the capture of Senegal. A feeling of adventure and romance, associated with the American struggle, had caused many of the young nobility to seek this new field of achievement, who, to use De Rochambeau's words, "brought out with them the heroic and chivalrous courage of the ancient French nobility." To their credit be it spoken also, they brought with them the ancient French politeness, for it was remarkable how soon they accommodated themselves to circumstances, made light of all the privations and inconveniences of a new country, and conformed to the familiar simplicity of republican manners. General Heath, who, by Washington's orders, was there to offer his services, was, by his own account, "charmed with the officers," who, on their part, he said, expressed the highest satisfaction with the treatment they received.

The instructions of the French ministry to the Count de Rochambeau placed him entirely under the command

of General Washington. The French troops were to be considered as auxiliaries, and as such were to take the left of the American troops, and, in all cases of ceremony, to yield them the preference. This considerate arrangement had been adopted at the suggestion of the Marquis de Lafayette, and was intended to prevent the recurrence of those questions of rank and etiquette which had heretofore disturbed the combined service.

Washington, in general orders, congratulated the army on the arrival of this timely and generous succor, which he hailed as a new tie between France and America; anticipating that the only contention between the two armies would be to excel each other in good offices, and in the display of every military virtue. The American cockade had hitherto been black, that of the French was white; he recommended to his officers a cockade of black and white intermingled in compliment to their allies, and as a symbol of friendship and union.

His joy at this important reinforcement was dashed by the mortifying reflection, that he was still unprovided with the troops and military means requisite for the combined operations meditated. Still he took upon himself the responsibility of immediate action, and forthwith despatched Lafayette to have an interview with the French commanders, explain the circumstances of the case, and concert plans for the proposed attack upon New York.

"Pressed on all sides by a choice of difficulties," writes he to the President, "I have adopted that line of conduct

which suited the dignity and faith of Congress, the reputation of these States, and the honor of our arms. Neither the season nor a regard to decency would permit delay. The die is cast, and it remains with the States to fulfill either their engagements, preserve their credit and support their independence, or to involve us in disgrace and defeat. . . . . I shall proceed on the supposition that they will ultimately consult their own interest and honor, and not suffer us to fail for want of means, which it is evidently in their power to afford. What has been done, and is doing, by some of the States, confirms the opinion I have entertained of the sufficient resources of the country. As to the disposition of the people to submit to any arrangements for bringing them forth, I see no reasonable grounds to doubt. If we fail for want of proper exertions, in any of the governments, I trust the responsibility will fall where it ought, and that I shall stand justified to Congress, to my country, and to the world."

The arrival, however, of the British Admiral Graves, at New York, on the 13th of July, with six ships-of-the-line, gave the enemy such a superiority of naval force, that the design on New York was postponed until the second French division should make its appearance, or a squadron under the Count de Guichen, which was expected from the West Indies.

In the meantime Sir Henry Clinton, who had information of all the plans and movements of the allies, de-

termined to forestall the meditated attack upon New York, by beating up the French quarters on Rhode Island. This he was to do in person at the head of six thousand men, aided by Admiral Arbuthnot with his fleet. Sir Henry accordingly proceeded with his troops to Throg's Neck on the sound, there to embark on board of transports which Arbuthnot was to provide. No sooner did Washington learn that so large a force had left New York, than he crossed the Hudson to Peekskill, and prepared to move towards King's Bridge, with the main body of his troops, which had recently been reinforced. His intention was, either to oblige Sir Henry to abandon his project against Rhode Island, or to strike a blow at New York during his absence. As Washington was on horseback, observing the crossing of the last division of his troops, General Arnold approached, having just arrived in the camp. Arnold had been manœuvring of late to get the command of West Point, and, among other means, had induced Mr. Robert R. Livingston, then a New York member of Congress, to suggest it in a letter to Washington as a measure of great expediency. Arnold now accosted the latter to know whether any place had been assigned to him. He was told that he was to command the left wing, and Washington added, that they would have further conversation on the subject when he returned to head-quarters. The silence and evident chagrin with which the reply was received surprised Washington, and he was still more surprised when he subse

quently learned that Arnold was more desirous of a garrison post than of a command in the field, although a post of honor had been assigned him, and active service was anticipated. Arnold's excuse was that his wounded leg still unfitted him for action either on foot or horseback; but that at West Point he might render himself useful.

The expedition of Sir Henry was delayed by the tardy arrival of transports. In the meantime he heard of the sudden move of Washington, and learned, moreover, that the position of the French at Newport had been strengthened by the militia from the neighboring country. These tidings disconcerted his plans. He left Admiral Arbuthnot to proceed with his squadron to Newport, blockade the French fleet, and endeavor to intercept the second division, supposed to be on its way, while he with his troops hastened back to New York.

In consequence of their return Washington again withdrew his forces to the west side of the Hudson; first establishing a post and throwing up small works at Dobb's Ferry, about ten miles above King's Bridge, to secure a communication across the river for the transportation of troops and ordnance, should the design upon New York be prosecuted.

Arnold now received the important command which he had so earnestly coveted. It included the fortress at West Point and the posts from Fishkill to King's Ferry, together with the corps of infantry and cavalry advanced

towards the enemy's line on the east side of the river. He was ordered to have the works at the Point completed as expeditiously as possible, and to keep all his posts on their guard against surprise; there being constant apprehensions that the enemy might make a sudden effort to gain possession of the river.

Having made these arrangements, Washington recrossed to the west side of the Hudson, and took post at Orangetown or Tappan, on the borders of the Jerseys, and opposite to Dobb's Ferry, to be at hand for any attempt upon New York.

The execution of this cherished design, however, was again postponed by intelligence that the second division of the French reinforcements was blockaded in the harbor of Brest by the British: Washington still had hopes that it might be carried into effect by the aid of the squadron of the Count de Guichen from the West Indies; or of a fleet from Cadiz.

At this critical juncture, an embarrassing derangement took place in the quartermaster-general's department, of which General Greene was the head. The reorganization of this department had long been in agitation. A system had been digested by Washington, Schuyler, and Greene, adapted, as they thought, to the actual situation of the country. Greene had offered, should it be adopted, to continue in the discharge of the duties of the department, without any extra emolument other than would cover the expenses of his family. Congress devised a

different scheme. He considered it incapable of execution, and likely to be attended with calamitous and disgraceful results; he therefore tendered his resignation Washington endeavored to prevent its being accepted. "Unless effectual measures are taken," said he, "to induce General Greene and the other principal officers of that department to continue their services, there must of necessity be a total stagnation of military business. We not only must cease from the preparations for the campaign, but in all probability shall be obliged to disperse, if not disband the army, for want of subsistence."

The tone and manner, however, assumed by General Greene in offering his resignation, and the time chosen, when the campaign was opened, the enemy in the field, and the French commanders waiting for coöperation, were deeply offensive to Congress. His resignation was promptly accepted: there was a talk even of suspending him from his command in the line.

Washington interposed his sagacious and considerate counsels to allay this irritation, and prevent the infliction of such an indignity upon an officer for whom he entertained the highest esteem and friendship. "A procedure of this kind, without a proper trial," said he, "must touch the feelings of every officer. It will show in a conspicuous point of view the uncertain tenure by which they hold their commissions. In a word, it will exhibit such a specimen of power, that I question much if there is an officer in the whole line that will hold a

commission beyond the end of the campaign, if he does till then. Such an act in the most despotic government would be attended at least with loud complaints."

The counsels of Washington prevailed; the indignity was not inflicted, and Congress was saved from the error, if not disgrace, of discarding from her service one of the ablest and most meritorious of her generals.

Colonel Pickering was appointed to succeed Greene as quartermaster-general, but the latter continued for some time, at the request of Washington, to aid in conducting the business of the department. Colonel Pickering acquitted himself in his new office with zeal, talents, and integrity, but there were radical defects in the system which defied all ability and exertion.

The commissariat was equally in a state of derangement. "At this very juncture," writes Washington (August, 20th), "I am reduced to the painful alternative, either of dismissing a part of the militia now assembling, or of letting them come forward to starve; which it will be extremely difficult for the troops already in the field to avoid. . . . . Every day's experience proves more and more that the present mode of supplies is the most uncertain, expensive, and injurious that could be devised. It is impossible for us to form any calculations of what we are to expect, and, consequently, to concert any plans for future execution. No adequate provision of forage having been made, we are now obliged to subsist the horses of the army by force, which, among other evils, often

gives rise to civil disputes, and prosecutions, as vexatious as they are burdensome to the public." In his emergencies he was forced to empty the magazines at West Point; yet these afforded but temporary relief; scarcity continued to prevail to a distressing degree, and on the 6th of September, he complains that the army has for two or three days been entirely destitute of meat. "Such injury to the discipline of the army," adds he, "and such distress to the inhabitants, result from these frequent events, that my feelings are hurt beyond description at the cries of the one and at seeing the other."

The anxiety of Washington at this moment of embarrassment was heightened by the receipt of disastrous intelligence from the South; the purport of which we shall succinctly relate in another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

NORTH CAROLINA. — DIFFICULTIES OF ITS INVASION. — CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE AND COUNTRY. — SUMTER, HIS CHARACTER AND STORY. — ROCKY MOUNT. — HANGING ROCK. — SLOW ADVANCE OF DE KALB. — GATES TAKES COMMAND. — DESOLATE MARCH. — BATTLE OF CAMDEN. — FLIGHT OF GATES. — SUMTER SURPRISED BY TARLETON AT THE WAXHAWS. — WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF MILITIA. — HIS LETTER TO GATES.

LORD CORNWALLIS, when left in military command at the South by Sir Henry Clinton, was charged, it will be recollected, with the invasion of North Carolina. It was an enterprise in which much difficulty was to be apprehended, both from the character of the people and the country. The original settlers were from various parts, most of them men who had experienced political or religious oppression, and had brought with them a quick sensibility to wrong, a stern appreciation of their rights, and an indomitable spirit of freedom and independence. In the heart of the State was a hardy Presbyterian stock, the Scotch Irish, as they were called, having emigrated from Scotland to Ireland, and thence to America; and who were said to possess the impulsiveness of the Irishman, with the dogged resolution of the Covenanter.

The early history of the colony abounds with instances of this spirit among its people. "They always behaved insolently to their governors," complains Governor Barrington in 1731; "some they have driven out of the country — at other times they set up a government of their own choice, supported by men under arms." It was in fact the spirit of popular liberty and self-government which stirred within them, and gave birth to the glorious axiom: "The rights of the many against the exactions of the few." So ripe was this spirit at an early day, that when the boundary line was run, in 1727, between North Carolina and Virginia, the borderers were eager to be included within the former province, "as there they paid no tribute to God or Cæsar."

It was this spirit which gave rise to the confederacy, called the Regulation, formed to withstand the abuses of power; and the first blood shed in our country, in resistance to arbitrary taxation, was at Almance in this province, in a conflict between the regulators and Governor Tryon. Above all, it should never be forgotten, that at Mecklenburg, in the heart of North Carolina, was fulminated the first declaration of independence of the British crown, upwards of a year before a like declaration by Congress.

A population so characterized presented formidable difficulties to the invader. The physical difficulties arising from the nature of the country consisted in its mountain fastnesses in the northwestern part, its vast forests,

its sterile tracts, its long rivers, destitute of bridges, and which, though fordable in fair weather, were liable to be swollen by sudden storms and freshets, and rendered deep, turbulent, and impassable. These rivers, in fact, which rushed down from the mountain, but wound sluggishly through the plains, were the military strength of the country, as we shall have frequent occasion to show in the course of our narrative.

Lord Cornwallis forbore to attempt the invasion of North Carolina until the summer heats should be over and the harvests gathered in. In the meantime he disposed of his troops in cantonments, to cover the frontiers of South Carolina and Georgia, and maintain their internal quiet. The command of the frontiers was given by him to Lord Rawdon, who made Camden his principal post. This town, the capital of Kershaw District, a fertile, fruitful country, was situated on the east bank of the Wateree River, on the road leading to North Carolina. It was to be the grand military depot for the projected campaign.

Having made these dispositions, Lord Cornwallis set up his head-quarters at Charleston, where he occupied himself in regulating the civil and commercial affairs of the province, in organizing the militia of the lower districts, and in forwarding provisions and munitions of war to Camden.

The proclamation of Sir Henry Clinton, putting an end to all neutrality, and the rigorous penalties and persecu-

tions with which all infractions of its terms were punished, had for a time quelled the spirit of the country. By degrees, however, the dread of British power gave way to impatience of British exactions. Symptoms of revolt manifested themselves in various parts. They were encouraged by intelligence that De Kalb, sent by Washington, was advancing through North Carolina at the head of two thousand men, and that the militia of that State and of Virginia were joining his standard. This was soon followed by tidings that Gates, the conqueror of Burgoyne, was on his way to take command of the Southern forces.

The prospect of such aid from the North reanimated the Southern patriots. One of the most eminent of these was Thomas Sumter, whom the Carolinians had surnamed the Game Cock. He was between forty and fifty years of age, brave, hardy, vigorous, resolute. He had served against the Indians in his boyhood, during the old French war, and had been present at the defeat of Braddock. In the present war he had held the rank of lieutenant-colonel of riflemen in the continental line. After the fall of Charleston, when patriots took refuge in contiguous States, or in the natural fastnesses of the country, he had retired with his family into one of the latter.

The lower part of South Carolina for upwards of a hundred miles back from the sea is a level country, abounding with swamps, locked up in the windings of the rivers which flow down from the Appalachian Moun-

tains. Some of these swamps are mere canebrakes, of little use until subdued by cultivation, when they yield abundant crops of rice. Others are covered with forests of cypress, cedar, and laurel, green all the year and odoriferous, but tangled with vines and almost impenetrable. In their bosoms, however, are fine savannahs; natural lawns, open to cultivation, and yielding abundant pasturage. It requires local knowledge, however, to penetrate these wildernesses, and hence they form strongholds to the people of the country. In one of these natural fastnesses, on the borders of the Santee, Sumter had taken up his residence, and hence he would sally forth in various directions. During a temporary absence his retreat had been invaded, his house burnt to the ground, his wife and children driven forth without shelter. Private injury had thus been added to the incentives of patriotism. Emerging from his hiding-place, he had thrown himself among a handful of his fellow-sufferers who had taken refuge in North Carolina. They chose him at once as a leader, and resolved on a desperate struggle for the deliverance of their native State. Destitute of regular weapons, they forged rude substitutes out of the implements of husbandry. Old mill-saws were converted into broadswords; knives at the ends of poles served for lances; while the country housewives gladly gave up their pewter dishes and other utensils, to be melted down and cast into bullets for such as had firearms.

When Sumter led this gallant band of exiles over the

border, they did not amount in number to two hundred; yet, with these, he attacked and routed a well-armed body of British troops and tories, the terror of the frontier. His followers supplied themselves with weapons from the slain. In a little while his band was augmented by recruits. Parties of militia, also, recently embodied under the compelling measures of Cornwallis, deserted to the patriot standard. Thus reinforced to the amount of six hundred men, he made, on the 30th of July, a spirited attack on the British post at Rocky Mount, near the Catawba, but was repulsed. A more successful attack was made by him, eight days afterwards, on another post at Hanging Rock. The Prince of Wales regiment which defended it was nearly annihilated, and a large body of North Carolina loyalists, under Colonel Brian, was routed and dispersed. The gallant exploits of Sumter were emulated in other parts of the country, and the partisan war thus commenced was carried on with an audacity that soon obliged the enemy to call in their outposts, and collect their troops in large masses.

The advance of De Kalb with reinforcements from the North, had been retarded by various difficulties, the most important of which was want of provisions. This had been especially the case, he said, since his arrival in North Carolina. The legislative or executive power, he complained, gave him no assistance, nor could he obtain supplies from the people but by military force. There was no flour in the camp, nor were dispositions made to

furnish any. His troops were reduced for a time to short allowance, and at length, on the 6th of July, brought to a positive halt at Deep River.* The North Carolina militia, under General Caswell, were already in the field, on the road to Camden, beyond the Pedee River. He was anxious to form a junction with them, and with some Virginia troops, under Colonel Porterfield, reliques of the defenders of Charleston; but a wide and sterile region lay between him and them, difficult to be traversed, unless magazines were established in advance, or he were supplied with provisions to take with him. Thus circumstanced, he wrote to Congress and to the State Legislature, representing his situation, and entreating relief. For three weeks he remained in this encampment, foraging an exhausted country for a meagre subsistence, and was thinking of deviating to the right, and seeking the fertile counties of Mecklenburg and Rowan, when, on the 25th of July, General Gates arrived at the camp.

The baron greeted him with a continental salute from his little park of artillery, and received him with the ceremony and deference due to a superior officer who was to take the command. There was a contest of politeness between the two generals. Gates approved of De Kalb's standing orders, but at the first review of the troops, to the great astonishment of the baron, gave orders for them to hold themselves in readiness to march

* A branch of Cape Fear River. The aboriginal name, Supporah.

at a *moment's warning.* It was evident he meant to signalize himself by celerity of movement in contrast with protracted delays.

It was in vain the destitute situation of the troops was represented to him, and that they had not a day's provision in advance. His reply was, that wagons laden with supplies were coming on, and would overtake them in two days.

On the 27th, he actually put the army in motion over the Buffalo Ford, on the direct road to Camden. Colonel Williams, the adjutant-general of De Kalb, warned him of the sterile nature of that route, and recommended a more circuitous one further north, which the baron had intended to take, and which passed through the abundant county of Mecklenburg. Gates persisted in taking the direct route, observing that he should the sooner form a junction with Caswell and the North Carolina militia; and as to the sterility of the country, his supplies would soon overtake him.

The route proved all that had been represented. It led through a region of pine barrens, sand hills, and swamps, with few human habitations, and those mostly deserted. The supplies of which he had spoken never overtook him. His army had to subsist itself on lean cattle, roaming almost wild in the woods; and to supply the want of bread with green Indian corn, unripe apples, and peaches. The consequence was, a distressing prevalence of dysentery.

Having crossed the Pedee River on the 3d of August, the army was joined by a handful of brave Virginia regulars, under Lieutenant-colonel Porterfield, who had been wandering about the country since the disaster of Charleston; and, on the 7th, the much desired junction took place with the North Carolina militia. On the 13th they encamped at Rugeley's Mills, otherwise called Clermont, about twelve miles from Camden, and on the following day were reinforced by a brigade of seven hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens.

On the approach of Gates, Lord Rawdon had concentrated his forces at Camden. The post was flanked by the Wateree River and Pine-tree Creek, and strengthened with redoubts. Lord Cornwallis had hastened hither from Charleston on learning that affairs in this quarter were drawing to a crisis, and had arrived here on the 13th. The British effective force thus collected was something more than two thousand, including officers. About five hundred were militia and tory refugees from North Carolina.

The forces under Gates, according to the return of his adjutant-general, were three thousand and fifty-two fit for duty; more than two thirds of them, however, were militia.

On the 14th, he received an express from General Sumter, who, with his partisan corps, after harassing the enemy at various points, was now endeavoring to cut off their supplies from Charleston. The object of the ex-

press was to ask a reinforcement of regulars to aid him in capturing a large convoy of clothing, ammunition, and stores, on its way to the garrison, and which would pass Wateree Ferry, about a mile from Camden.

Gates accordingly detached Colonel Woolford of the Maryland line, with one hundred regulars, a party of artillery, and two brass field-pieces. On the same evening he moved with his main force to take post at a deep stream about seven miles from Camden, intending to attack Lord Rawdon or his redoubts should he march out in force to repel Sumter.

It seems hardly credible that Gates should have been so remiss in collecting information concerning the movements of his enemy as to be utterly unaware that Lord Cornwallis had arrived at Camden. Such, however, we are assured by his adjutant-general, was the fact.*

By a singular coincidence, Lord Cornwallis on the very same evening sallied forth from Camden to attack the American camp at Clermont.

About two o'clock at night, the two forces blundered, as it were, on each other about half way. A skirmish took place between their advance guards, in which Porterfield of the Virginia regulars was mortally wounded. Some prisoners were taken on either side. From these the respective commanders learnt the nature of the forces each had stumbled upon. Both halted, formed their

* Narrative of Adjutant-general Williams.

troops for action, but deferred further hostilities until daylight.

Gates was astounded at being told that the enemy at hand was Cornwallis with three thousand men. Calling a council of war, he demanded what was best to be done. For a moment or two there was blank silence. It was broken by General Stevens of the Virginia militia, with the question, "Gentlemen, is it not too late *now* to do anything but fight?" No other advice was asked or offered, and all were required to repair to their respective commands,* though General De Kalb, we are told, was of opinion that they should regain their position at Clermont, and there await an attack.

In forming the line, the first Maryland division, including the Delawares, was on the right, commanded by De Kalb. The Virginia militia under Stevens, were on the left. Caswell with the North Carolinians formed the centre. The artillery was in battery on the road. Each flank was covered by a marsh. The second Maryland brigade formed a reserve, a few hundred yards in rear of the first.

At daybreak (August 16th), the enemy were dimly descried advancing in column; they appeared to be displaying to the right. The deputy adjutant-general ordered the artillery to open a fire upon them, and then rode to General Gates, who was in the rear of the line, to inform him of the cause of the firing. Gates ordered that

* Narrative of Adjutant-general Williams.

Stevens should advance briskly with his brigade of Virginia militia and attack them while in the act of displaying. No sooner did Stevens receive the order than he put his brigade in motion, but discovered that the right wing of the enemy was already in line. A few sharpshooters were detached to run forward, post themselves behind trees within forty or fifty yards of the enemy to extort their fire while at a distance, and render it less terrible to the militia. The expedient failed. The British rushed on shouting and firing. Stevens called to his men to stand firm, and put them in mind of their bayonets. His words were unheeded. The inexperienced militia, dismayed and confounded by this impetuous assault, threw down their loaded muskets and fled. The panic spread to the North Carolina militia. Part of them made a temporary stand, but soon joined with the rest in flight, rendered headlong and disastrous by the charge and pursuit of Tarleton and his cavalry.

Gates, seconded by his officers, made several attempts to rally the militia, but was borne along with them. The day was hazy ; there was no wind to carry off the smoke, which hung over the field of battle like a thick cloud. Nothing could be seen distinctly. Supposing that the regular troops were dispersed like the militia, Gates gave all up for lost, and retreated from the field.

The regulars, however, had not given way. The Maryland brigades and the Delaware regiment, unconscious that they were deserted by the militia, stood their ground,

and bore the brunt of the battle. Though repeatedly broken, they as often rallied, and braved even the deadly push of the bayonet. At length a charge of Tarleton's cavalry on their flank threw them into confusion, and drove them into the woods and swamps. None showed more gallantry on this disastrous day than the Baron de Kalb; he fought on foot with the second Maryland brigade, and fell exhausted after receiving eleven wounds. His aide-de-camp, De Buysson, supported him in his arms and was repeatedly wounded in protecting him. He announced the rank and nation of his general, and both were taken prisoners. De Kalb died in the course of a few days, dictating in his last moments a letter expressing his affection for the officers and men of his division who had so nobly stood by him in this deadly strife.

If the militia fled too soon in this battle, said the adjutant-general, the regulars remained too long; fighting when there was no hope of victory.*

General Gates in retreating, had hoped to rally a sufficient force at Clermont to cover the retreat of the regulars, but the further they fled, the more the militia were dispersed, until the generals were abandoned by all but their aides. To add to the mortification of Gates, he learned in the course of his retreat that Sumter had been completely successful, and having reduced the enemy's redoubt on the Wateree, and captured one hundred pris-

* Williams' Narrative.

oners and forty loaded wagons, was marching off with his booty on the opposite side of the river; apprehending danger from the quarter in which he had heard firing in the morning. Gates had no longer any means of coöperating with him; he sent orders to him, therefore, to retire in the best manner he could; while he himself proceeded with General Caswell towards the village of Charlotte, about sixty miles distant.

Cornwallis was apprehensive that Sumter's corps might form a rallying point to the routed army. On the morning of the 17th of August, therefore, he detached Tarleton in pursuit with a body of cavalry and light infantry, about three hundred and fifty strong. Sumter was retreating up the western side of the Wateree, much encumbered by his spoils and prisoners. Tarleton pushed up by forced and concealed marches on the eastern side. Horses and men suffered from the intense heat of the weather. At dusk Tarleton descried the fires of the American camp about a mile from the opposite shore. He gave orders to secure all boats on the river, and to light no fire in the camp. In the morning his sentries gave word that the Americans were quitting their encampment. It was evident they knew nothing of a British force being in pursuit of them. Tarleton now crossed the Wateree; the infantry with a three-pounder passed in boats; the cavalry swam their horses where the river was not fordable. The delay in crossing, and the diligence of Sumter's march, increased the distance between the pursuers and the pursued.

About noon a part of Tarleton's force gave out through heat and fatigue. Leaving them to repose on the bank of Fishing Creek, he pushed on with about one hundred dragoons, the freshest and most able ; still marching with great circumspection. As he entered a valley, a discharge of small-arms from a thicket tumbled a dragoon from his saddle. His comrades galloped up to the place, and found two American videttes whom they sabred before Tarleton could interpose. A sergeant and five dragoons rode up to the summit of a neighboring hill to reconnoiter. Crouching on their horses they made signs to Tarleton. He cautiously approached the crest of the hill, and looking over beheld the American camp on a neighboring height, and apparently in a most negligent condition.

Sumter, in fact, having pressed his retreat to the neighborhood of the Catawba Ford, and taken a strong position at the mouth of Fishing Creek, and his patrols having scoured the road without discovering any signs of an enemy, considered himself secure from surprise. The two shots fired by his videttes had been heard, but were supposed to have been made by militia shooting cattle. The troops having for the last four days been almost without food or sleep, were now indulged in complete relaxation. Their arms were stacked, and they were scattered about, some strolling, some lying on the grass under the trees, some bathing in the river. Sumter himself had thrown off part of his clothes on account of the heat of the weather.

Having well reconnoitered this negligent camp, indulging in summer supineness and sultry repose, Tarleton, prepared for instant attack. His cavalry and infantry formed into one line, dashed forward with a general shout, and, before the Americans could recover from their surprise, got between them and the parade ground on which the muskets were stacked.

All was confusion and consternation in the American camp. Some opposition was made from behind baggage wagons, and there was skirmishing in various quarters, but in a little while there was a universal flight to the river and the woods. Between three and four hundred were killed and wounded; all their arms and baggage, with two brass field-pieces, fell into the hands of the enemy, who also recaptured the prisoners and booty taken at Camden. Sumter with about three hundred and fifty of his men effected a retreat; he galloped off, it is said, without saddle, hat, or coat.

Gates, on reaching the village of Charlotte, had been joined by some fugitives from his army. He continued on to Hillsborough, one hundred and eighty miles from Camden, where he made a stand and endeavored to rally his scattered forces. His regular troops, however, were little more than one thousand. As to the militia of North and South Carolina, they had dispersed to their respective homes, depending upon the patriotism and charity of the farmers along the road for food and shelter.

It was not until the beginning of September that Washington received word of the disastrous reverse at Camden. The shock was the greater, as previous reports from that quarter had represented the operations a few days preceding the action as much in our favor. It was evident to Washington that the course of war must ultimately tend to the Southern States, yet the situation of affairs in the North did not permit him to detach any sufficient force for their relief. All that he could do for the present was to endeavor to hold the enemy in check in that quarter. For this purpose, he gave orders that some regular troops enlisted in Maryland for the war, and intended for the main army, should be sent to the southward. He wrote to Governor Rutledge of South Carolina (12th September), to raise a permanent, compact, well-organized body of troops, instead of depending upon a numerous army of militia, always "inconceivably expensive, and too fluctuating and undisciplined" to oppose a regular force. He was still more urgent and explicit on this head in his letters to the President of Congress (September 15th). "Regular troops alone," said he, "are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defense as offense; and whenever a substitute is attempted, it must prove illusory and ruinous. No militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by a constant course of discipline and service. I have never yet been witness to a single instance,

that can justify a different opinion; and it is most earnestly to be wished, that the liberties of America may no longer be trusted, in any material degree, to so precarious a dependence. . . . . In my ideas of the true system of war at the southward, the object ought to be to have a good army, rather than a large one. Every exertion should be made by North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, to raise a permanent force of six thousand men, exclusive of horse and artillery. These, with the occasional aid of the militia in the vicinity of the scene of action, will not only suffice to prevent the further progress of the enemy, but, if properly supplied, to oblige them to compact their force and relinquish a part of what they now hold. To expel them from the country entirely is what we cannot aim at, till we derive more effectual support from abroad; and by attempting too much, instead of going forward, we shall go backward. Could such a force be once set on foot, it would immediately make an inconceivable change in the face of affairs not only in the opposition to the enemy, but in expense, consumption of provisions, and waste of arms and stores. No magazines can be equal to the demands of an army of militia, and none need economy more than ours."

He had scarce written the foregoing, when he received a letter from the now unfortunate Gates, dated at Hillsborough, August 30th and September 3d, giving particulars of his discomfiture. No longer vaunting and vainglori-

ous, he pleads nothing but his patriotism, and deprecates the fall which he apprehends awaits him. The appeal which he makes to Washington's magnanimity to support him in this day of his reverse, is the highest testimonial he could give to the exalted character of the man whom he once affected to underrate and aspired to supplant.

"Anxious for the public good," said he, "I shall continue my unwearied endeavors to stop the progress of the enemy, reinstate our affairs, recommence an offensive war, and recover all our losses in the Southern States. But if being unfortunate is solely a reason sufficient for removing me from command, I shall most cheerfully submit to the orders of Congress, and resign an office which few generals would be anxious to possess, and where the utmost skill and fortitude are subject to be baffled by difficulties, which must for a time surround the chief in command here. That your Excellency may meet with no such difficulties, that your road to fame and fortune may be smooth and easy, is the sincere wish of your most humble servant."

Again: "If I can yet render good service to the United States, it will be necessary it should be seen that I have the support of Congress, and of your Excellency; otherwise, some men may think they please my superiors by blaming me, and thus recommend themselves to favor. But you, sir, will be too generous to lend an ear to such men, if such there be, and will show your greatness of soul rather by protecting than slighting the unfortunate."

Washington in his reply, while he acknowledged the shock and surprise caused by the first account of the unexpected event, did credit to the behavior of the continental troops. "The accounts," added he, "which the enemy give of the action, show that their victory was dearly bought. Under present circumstances, the system which you are pursuing seems to be extremely proper. It would add no good purpose to take a position near the enemy while you are so far inferior in force. If they can be kept in check by the light irregular troops under Colonel Sumter and other active officers, they will gain nothing by the time which must be necessarily spent by you in collecting and arranging the new army, forming magazines and replacing the stores which were lost in the action.

Washington still cherished the idea of a combined attack upon New York as soon as a French naval force should arrive. The destruction of the enemy here would relieve this part of the Union from an internal war, and enable its troops and resources to be united with those of France in vigorous efforts against the common enemy elsewhere. Hearing, therefore, that the Count de Guichen, with his West India squadron, was approaching the coast, Washington prepared to proceed to Hartford in Connecticut, there to hold a conference with the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay, and concert a plan for future operations, of which the attack on New York was to form the principal feature.

CHAPTER IX.

TREASON OF ARNOLD.—HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE ENEMY.—HIS NEGOTIATIONS, WITH ANDRÉ.—PARTING SCENE WITH WASHINGTON.—MIDNIGHT CONFERENCE ON THE BANKS OF THE HUDSON.—RETURN OF ANDRÉ BY LAND.—CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS CAPTURE.

E have now to enter upon a sad episode of our revolutionary history—the treason of Arnold. Of the military skill, daring enterprise, and indomitable courage of this man, ample evidence has been given in the foregoing pages. Of the implicit confidence reposed in his patriotism by Washington, sufficient proof is manifested in the command with which he was actually entrusted. But Arnold was false at heart, and, at the very time of seeking that command, had been for many months in traitorous correspondence with the enemy.

The first idea of proving recreant to the cause he had vindicated so bravely, appears to have entered his mind when the charges preferred against him by the council of Pennsylvania were referred by Congress to a court-martial. Before that time he had been incensed against Pennsylvania: but now his wrath was excited against his country, which appeared so insensible to his services.

Disappointment in regard to the settlement of his accounts, added to his irritation, and mingled sordid motives with his resentment; and he began to think how, while he wreaked his vengeance on his country, he might do it with advantage to his fortunes. With this view he commenced a correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton in a disguised handwriting, and, under the signature of *Gustavus*, representing himself as a person of importance in the American service, who, being dissatisfied with the late proceedings of Congress, particularly the alliance with France, was desirous of joining the cause of Great Britain, could he be certain of personal security, and indemnification for whatever loss of property he might sustain. His letters occasionally communicated articles of intelligence of some moment, which proved to be true, and induced Sir Henry to keep up the correspondence; which was conducted on his part by his aide-de-camp, Major John André, likewise in a disguised hand, and under the signature of John Anderson.

Months elapsed before Sir Henry discovered who was his secret correspondent. Even after discovering it he did not see fit to hold out any very strong inducements to Arnold for desertion. The latter was out of command, and had nothing to offer but his services; which in his actual situation were scarcely worth buying.

In the meantime the circumstances of Arnold were daily becoming more desperate. Debts were accumulating, and creditors becoming more and more importu-

nate, as his means to satisfy them decreased. The public reprimand he had received was rankling in his mind, and filling his heart with bitterness. Still he hesitated on the brink of absolute infamy, and attempted a half-way leap. Such was his proposition to M. de Luzerne to make himself subservient to the policy of the French government, on condition of receiving a loan equal to the amount of his debts. This he might have reconciled to his conscience by the idea that France was an ally, and its policy likely to be friendly. It was his last card before resorting to utter treachery. Failing in it, his desperate alternative was to get some important command, the betrayal of which to the enemy might obtain for him a munificent reward.

He may possibly have had such an idea in his mind some time previously, when he sought the command of a naval and military expedition, which failed to be carried into effect; but such certainly was the secret of his eagerness to obtain the command of West Point, the great object of British and American solicitude, on the possession of which were supposed by many to hinge the fortunes of the war.

He took command of the post and its dependencies about the beginning of August, fixing his head-quarters at Beverley, a country seat a little below West Point, on the opposite or eastern side of the river. It stood in a lonely part of the Highlands, high up from the river, yet at the foot of a mountain covered with woods. It was

commonly called the Robinson House, having formerly belonged to Washington's early friend, Colonel Beverley Robinson, who had obtained a large part of the Phillipse estate in this neighborhood, by marrying one of the heiresses. Colonel Robinson was a royalist; had entered into the British service, and was now residing in New York, and Beverley with its surrounding lands had been confiscated.

From this place Arnold carried on a secret correspondence with Major André. Their letters, still in disguised hands, and under the names of Gustavus and John Anderson, purported to treat merely of commercial operations, but the real matter in negotiation was the betrayal of West Point and the Highlands to Sir Henry Clinton. This stupendous piece of treachery was to be consummated at the time when Washington, with the main body of his army, would be drawn down towards King's Bridge, and the French troops landed on Long Island, in the projected coöperation against New York. At such time, a flotilla under Rodney, having on board a large land force, was to ascend the Hudson to the Highlands, which would be surrendered by Arnold almost without opposition, under pretext of insufficient force to make resistance. The immediate result of this surrender, it was anticipated, would be the defeat of the combined attempt upon New York; and its ultimate effect might be the dismemberment of the Union and the dislocation of the whole American scheme of warfare.

We have before had occasion to mention Major André, but the part which he took in this dark transaction, and the degree of romantic interest subsequently thrown around his memory, call for a more specific notice of him. He was born in London, in 1751, but his parents were of Geneva, in Switzerland, where he was educated. Being intended for mercantile life, he entered a London counting-house, but had scarce attained his eighteenth year when he formed a romantic attachment to a beautiful girl, Miss Honora Sneyd, by whom his passion was returned, and they became engaged. This sadly unfitted him for the sober routine of the counting-house. "All my mercantile calculations," writes he in one of his boyish letters, "go to the tune of dear Honora."

The father of the young lady interfered, and the premature match was broken off. André abandoned the counting-house and entered the army. His first commission was dated March 4th, 1771; but he subsequently visited Germany, and returned to England in 1773, still haunted by his early passion. His lady love, in the meantime, had been wooed by other admirers, and in the present year became the second wife of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, a young widower of twenty-six.*

André came to America in 1774, as lieutenant of the Royal English Fusileers; and was among the officers captured at Saint John's, early in the war, by Mont-

*Father, by his first marriage, of the celebrated Maria Edgeworth.

gomery. He still bore about with him a memento of his boyish passion, the "dear talisman," as he called it, a miniature of Miss Sneyd painted by himself in 1769. In a letter to a friend, soon after his capture, he writes, "I have been taken prisoner by the Americans, and stripped of everything except the picture of Honora, which I concealed in my mouth. Preserving that, I yet think myself fortunate."

His temper, however, appears to have been naturally light and festive; and if he still cherished this "tender remembrance," it was but as one of those documents of early poetry and romance, which serve to keep the heart warm and tender among the gay and cold realities of life. What served to favor the idea was a little song which he had composed when in Philadelphia, commencing with the lines,—

"Return enraptured hours
When Delia's heart was mine;"

and which was supposed to breathe the remembrance of his early and ill-requited passion.*

His varied and graceful talents, and his engaging manners, rendered him generally popular; while his devoted and somewhat subservient loyalty recommended him to the favor of his commander, and obtained him, without any distinguished military services, the appointment of

* Composed at the request of Miss Rebecca Redman.

adjutant-general with the rank of major. He was a prime promoter of elegant amusement in camp and garrison; manager, actor, and scene painter in those amateur theatricals in which the British officers delighted. He was one of the principal devisers of the Mischianza in Philadelphia, in which semi-effeminate pageant he had figured as one of the knights champions of beauty; Miss Shippen, afterwards Mrs. Arnold, being the lady whose peerless charms he undertook to vindicate. He held, moreover, a facile, and at times, satirical pen, and occasionally amused himself with caricaturing in rhyme the appearance and exploits of the "rebel officers."

André had already employed that pen in a furtive manner, after the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British; having carried on a correspondence with the leaders of a body of loyalists near the waters of the Chesapeake, who were conspiring to restore the royal government.* In the present instance he had engaged, nothing loth, in a service of intrigue and manœuvre, which, however sanctioned by military usuage, should hardly have invited the zeal of a high-minded man. We say manœuvre, because he appears to have availed himself of his former intimacy with Mrs. Arnold, to make her an unconscious means of facilitating a correspondence with her husband. Some have inculpated her in the guilt of the transaction, but, we think, unjustly. It

* Simcoe's *Military Journal*, p. 153–54.

has been alleged that a correspondence had been going on between her and André previous to her marriage, and was kept up after it; but as far as we can learn, only one letter passed between them, written by André in August 16th, 1779, in which he solicits her remembrance, assures her that respect for her and the fair circle in which he had become acquainted with her, remains unimpaired by distance or political broils, reminds her that the Mischianza had made him a complete milliner, and offers his services to furnish her with supplies in that department. "I shall be glad," adds he sportively, "to enter into the whole detail of cap-wire, needles, gauze, etc., and to the best of my abilities render you, in these trifles, services from which I hope you would infer a zeal to be further employed." The apparent object of this letter was to open a convenient medium of communication, which Arnold might use without exciting her suspicion.

Various circumstances connected with this nefarious negotiation, argue lightness of mind and something of debasing alloy on the part of André. The correspondence carried on for months in the jargon of traffic, savored less of the camp than the counting-house; the protracted tampering with a brave but necessitous man for the sacrifice of his fame and the betrayal of his trust, strikes us as being beneath the range of a truly chivalrous nature.

Correspondence had now done its part in the business; for the completion of the plan and the adjustment of the traitor's recompense, a personal meeting was necessary

between Arnold and André. The former proposed that it should take place at his own quarters at the Robinson House, where André should come in disguise, as a bearer of intelligence, and under the feigned name of John Anderson. André positively objected to entering the American lines; it was arranged, therefore, that the meeting should take place on neutral ground, near the American outposts, at Dobb's Ferry, on the 11th of September, at twelve o'clock. André attended at the appointed place and time, accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson, who was acquainted with the plot. An application of the latter for the restoration of his confiscated property in the Highlands, seemed to have been used occasionally as a blind in these proceedings.

Arnold had passed the preceding night at what was called the White House, the residence of Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, situated on the west side of the Hudson, in Haverstraw Bay, about two miles below Stony Point. He set off thence in his barge for the place of rendezvous; but, not being protected by a flag, was fired upon and pursued by the British guard-boats stationed near Dobb's Ferry. He took refuge at an American post on the western shore, whence he returned in the night to his quarters in the Robinson House. Lest his expedition should occasion some surmise, he pretended, in a note to Washington, that he had been down the Hudson to arrange signals in case of any movement of the enemy upon the river.

New arrangements were made for an interview, but it was postponed until after Washington should depart for Hartford, to hold the proposed conference with Count Rochambeau and the other French officers. In the meantime, the British sloop of war, *Vulture*, anchored a few miles below Teller's Point, to be at hand in aid of the negotiation. On board was Colonel Robinson, who, pretending to believe that General Putnam still commanded in the Highlands, addressed a note to him requesting an interview on the subject of his confiscated property. This letter he sent by a flag, inclosed in one addressed to Arnold; soliciting of him the same boon should General Putnam be absent.

On the 18th September, Washington with his suite crossed the Hudson to Verplanck's Point, in Arnold's barge, on his way to Hartford. Arnold accompanied him as far as Peekskill, and on the way laid before him, with affected frankness, the letter of Colonel Robinson, and asked his advice. Washington disapproved of any such interview, observing, that the civil authorities alone had cognizance of these questions of confiscated property.

Arnold now openly sent a flag on board of the *Vulture*, as if bearing a reply to the letter he had communicated to the commander-in-chief. By this occasion he informed Colonel Robinson, that a person with a boat and flag would be alongside the *Vulture*, on the night of the 20th; and that any matter he might wish to communicate, would be laid before General Washington on the

following Saturday, when he might be expected back from Newport.

On the faith of the information thus covertly conveyed, André proceeded up the Hudson on the 20th, and went on board the *Vulture*, where he found Colonel Robinson, and expected to meet Arnold. The latter, however, had made other arrangements, probably with a view to his personal security. About half-past eleven, of a still and starlight night (the 21st), a boat was descried from on board, gliding silently along, rowed by two men with muffled oars. She was hailed by an officer on watch, and called to account. A man, seated in the stern, gave out that they were from King's Ferry, bound to Dobb's Ferry. He was ordered alongside, and soon made his way on board. He proved to be Mr. Joshua Hett Smith, already mentioned, whom Arnold had prevailed upon to go on board of the *Vulture*, and bring a person on shore who was coming from New York with important intelligence. He had given him passes to protect him and those with him, in case he should be stopped either in going or returning, by the American water guard, which patrolled the river in whale-boats. He had made him the bearer of a letter addressed to Colonel Beverley Robinson, which was to the following purport: "This will be delivered to you by Mr. Smith, who will conduct you to a place of safety. Neither Mr. Smith nor any other person shall be made acquainted with your proposals: if they (which I doubt not) are of such a nature that I can offi-

cially take notice of them, I shall do it with pleasure. I take it for granted Colonel Robinson will not propose anything that is not for the interest of the United States as well as of himself." All this use of Colonel Robinson's name was intended as a blind, should the letter be intercepted.

Robinson introduced André to Smith by the name of John Anderson, who was to go on shore in his place (he being unwell), to have an interview with General Arnold. André wore a blue great coat which covered his uniform, and Smith always declared that at the time he was totally ignorant of his name and military character. Robinson considered this whole nocturnal proceeding full of peril, and would have dissuaded André, but the latter was zealous in executing his mission, and, embarking in the boat with Smith, was silently rowed to the western side of the river, about six miles below Stony Point. Here they landed a little after midnight, at the foot of a shadowy mountain called the Long Clove; a solitary place, the haunt of the owl and the whippoorwill, and well fitted for a treasonable conference.

Arnold was in waiting, but standing aloof among thickets. He had come hither on horseback from Smith's house, about three or four miles distant, attended by one of Smith's servants, likewise mounted. The midnight negotiation between André and Arnold was carried on in darkness among the trees. Smith remained in the boat, and the servant drew off to a distance with the horses

One hour after another passed away, when Smith approached the place of conference, and gave warning that it was near daybreak, and if they lingered much longer the boat would be discovered.

The nefarious bargain was not yet completed, and Arnold feared the sight of a boat going to the *Vulture* might cause suspicion. He prevailed, therefore, upon André to remain on shore until the following night. The boat was accordingly sent to a creek higher up the river, and André, mounting the servant's horse, set off with Arnold, for Smith's house. The road passed through the village of Haverstraw. As they rode along in the dark, the voice of a sentinel demanding the countersign startled André with the fearful conviction that he was within the American lines, but it was too late to recede. It was daybreak when they arrived at Smith's house.

They had scarcely entered when the booming of cannon was heard from down the river. It gave André uneasiness, and with reason. Colonel Livingston, who commanded above at Verplanck's Point, learning that the *Vulture* lay within shot of Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, had sent a party with cannon to that point in the night, and they were now firing upon the sloop of war. André watched the cannonade with an anxious eye from an upper window of Smith's house. At one time he thought the *Vulture* was on fire. He was relieved from painful solicitude when he saw the vessel weigh anchor, and drop down the river out of reach of cannon-shot.

After breakfast, the plot for the betrayal of West Point and its dependent posts was adjusted, and the sum agreed upon that Arnold was to receive, should it be successful. André was furnished with plans of the works, and explanatory papers, which, at Arnold's request, he placed between his stockings and his feet; promising, in case of accident, to destroy them.

All matters being thus arranged, Arnold prepared to return in his own barge to his head-quarters at the Robinson House. As the *Vulture* had shifted her ground, he suggested to André a return to New York by land, as most safe and expeditious; the latter, however, insisted upon being put on board of the sloop of war, on the ensuing night. Arnold consented; but, before his departure, to provide against the possible necessity of a return by land, he gave André the following pass, dated from the Robinson House:—

"Permit Mr. John Anderson to pass the guards to the White Plains, or below, if he chooses; he being on public business by my direction.

"B. Arnold, M. Genl."

Smith also, who was to accompany him, was furnished with passports to proceed either by water or by land.

Arnold departed about ten o'clock. André passed a lonely day, casting many a wistful look toward the *Vulture*. Once on board of that ship he would be safe; he

would have fulfilled his mission; the capture of West Point would be certain, and his triumph would be complete. As evening approached he grew impatient, and spoke to Smith about departure. To his surprise, he found the latter had made no preparation for it; he had discharged his boatmen, who had gone home: in short, he refused to take him on board of the *Vulture*. The cannonade of the morning had probably made him fear for his personal safety, should he attempt to go on board, the *Vulture* having resumed her exposed position. He offered, however, to cross the river with André at King's Ferry, put him in the way of returning to New York by land, and accompany him some distance on horseback.

André was in an agony at finding himself, notwithstanding all his stipulations, forced within the American lines; but there seemed to be no alternative, and he prepared for the hazardous journey.

He wore, as we have noted, a military coat under a long blue surtout; he was now persuaded to lay it aside, and put on a citizen's coat of Smith's; thus adding disguise to the other humiliating and hazardous circumstances of the case.

It was about sunset when André and Smith, attended by a negro servant of the latter, crossed from King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point. After proceeding about eight miles on the road toward White Plains, they were stopped between eight and nine o'clock, near Crompond, by a patrolling party. The captain of it was uncommonly in-

quisitive and suspicious. The passports with Arnold's signature satisfied him. He warned them, however, against the danger of proceeding further in the night. Cow Boys from the British lines were scouring the country, and had recently marauded the neighborhood. Smith's fears were again excited, and André was obliged to yield to them. A bed was furnished them in a neighboring house, where André passed an anxious and restless night, under the very eye, as it were, of an American patrol.

At daybreak he awoke Smith, and hurried their departure, and his mind was lightened of a load of care, when he found himself out of the reach of the patrol and its inquisitive commander.

They were now approaching that noted part of the country, heretofore mentioned as the Neutral Ground, extending north and south about thirty miles, between the British and American lines. A beautiful region of forest-clad hills, fertile valleys, and abundant streams, but now almost desolated by the scourings of Skinners and Cow Boys: the former professing allegiance to the American cause, the latter to the British, but both arrant marauders.

One who had resided at the time in this region, gives a sad picture of its state. Houses plundered and dismantled; inclosures broken down; cattle carried away; fields lying waste; the roads grass-grown; the country mournful, solitary, silent—reminding one of the desola-

tion presented in the song of Deborah. "In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked in bypaths. The inhabitants of the villages ceased; they ceased in Israel." *

About two and a half miles from Pine's Bridge, on the Croton River, André and his companion partook of a scanty meal at a farm-house which had recently been harried by the Cow Boys. Here they parted, Smith to return home, André to pursue his journey alone to New York. His spirits, however, were cheerful; for, having got beyond the patrols, he considered the most perilous part of his route accomplished.

About six miles beyond Pine's Bridge he came to a place where the road forked, the left branch leading toward White Plains in the interior of the country, the right inclining toward the Hudson. He had originally intended to take the left hand road, the other being said to be infested by Cow Boys. These, however, were not to be apprehended by him, as they belonged to the lower party or British; it led, too, more directly to New York; so he turned down it, and took his course along the river road.

He had not proceeded far, when coming to a place where a small stream crossed the road and ran into a woody dell, a man stepped out from the trees, leveled a musket, and brought him to a stand, while two other men

* See Dwight's *Travels*, vol. iii.

similarly armed, showed themselves prepared to second their comrade.

The man who had first stepped out wore a refugee uniform. At sight of it, André's heart leapt, and he felt himself secure. Losing all caution, he exclaimed eagerly: "Gentlemen, I hope you belong to our party?" —"What party?" was asked.—"The lower party," said André.—"We do," was the reply. All reserve was now at an end. André declared himself to be a British officer; that he had been up the country on particular business, and must not be detained a single moment. He drew out his watch as he spoke. It was a gold one, and served to prove to them that he was what he represented himself, gold watches being seldom worn in those days, excepting by persons of consequence.

To his consternation, the supposed refugee now avowed himself and his companions to be Americans, and told André he was their prisoner!

It was even so. The sacking and burning of Young's House, and the carrying of its rustic defenders into captivity, had roused the spirit of the Neutral Ground. The yeomanry of that harassed country had turned out in parties to intercept freebooters from the British lines, who had been recently on the maraud, and might be returning to the city with their spoils. One of these parties, composed of seven men of the neighborhood, had divided itself. Four took post on a hill above Sleepy Hollow, to watch the road which crossed the country;

the other three, John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, and David Williams by name, stationed themselves on the road which runs parallel to the Hudson. Two of them were seated on the grass playing at cards to pass away the time, while one mounted guard.

The one in refugee garb who brought André to a stand, was John Paulding, a stout-hearted youngster, who, like most of the young men of this outraged neighborhood, had been repeatedly in arms to repel or resent aggressions, and now belonged to the militia. He had twice been captured and confined in the loathsome military prisons, where patriots suffered in New York, first in the North Dutch Church, and last in the noted Sugar House. Both times he had made his escape; the last time, only four days previous to the event of which we are treating. The ragged refugee coat, which had deceived André and been the cause of his betraying himself, had been given to Paulding by one of his captors, in exchange for a good yeoman garment of which they stripped him.* This slight circumstance may have produced the whole discovery of the treason.

André was astounded at finding into what hands he had fallen; and how he had betrayed himself by his heedless avowal. Promptly, however, recovering his self-possession, he endeavored to pass off his previous account of himself as a subterfuge. "A man must do any-

* Stated on the authority of Commodore Hiram Paulding, a son of the captor, who heard it repeatedly from the lips of his father.

thing," said he, laughingly, "to get along." He now declared himself to be a continental officer, going down to Dobb's Ferry to get information from below; so saying, he drew forth and showed them the pass of General Arnold.

This, in the first instance, would have been sufficient, but his unwary tongue had ruined him. The suspicions of his captors were completely roused. Seizing the bridle of his horse, they ordered him to dismount. He warned them that he was on urgent business for the general, and that they would get themselves into trouble should they detain him. "We care not for that," was the reply, as they led him among the thickets, on the border of the brook.

Paulding asked whether he had any letters about him. He answered no. They proceeded to search him. A minute description is given of his dress. He wore a round hat, a blue surtout, a crimson close-bodied coat, somewhat faded; the button-holes worked with gold, and the buttons covered with gold lace, a nankeen vest, and small-clothes and boots.

They obliged him to take off his coat and vest, and found on him eighty dollars in Continental money, but nothing to warrant suspicion of anything sinister, and were disposed to let him proceed, when Paulding exclaimed: "Boys, I am not satisfied—his boots must come off."

At this André changed color. His boots, he said,

came off with difficulty, and he begged he might not be subjected to the inconvenience and delay. His remonstrances were in vain. He was obliged to sit down: his boots were drawn off, and the concealed papers discovered. Hastily scanning them, Paulding exclaimed, "My God! He is a spy!"

He demanded of André where he had gotten these papers.

"Of a man at Pine's Bridge, a stranger to me," was the reply.

While dressing himself, André endeavored to ransom himself from his captors; rising from one offer to another. He would give any sum of money if they would let him go. He would give his horse, saddle, bridle, and one hundred guineas, and would send them to any place that might be fixed upon.

Williams asked him if he would not give more.

He replied, that he would give any reward they might name either in goods or money, and would remain with two of their party while one went to New York to get it.

Here Paulding broke in and declared with an oath, that if he would give ten thousand guineas, he should not stir one step.*

The unfortunate André now submitted to his fate, and the captors set off with their prisoner for North Castle, the nearest American post, distant ten or twelve miles

* Testimony of David Williams.

They proceeded across a hilly and woody region, part of the way by the road, part across fields. One strode in front, occasionally holding the horse by the bridle, the others walked on either side. André rode on in silence, declining to answer further questions until he should come before a military officer. About noon, they halted at a farm-house where the inhabitants were taking their mid-day repast. The worthy housewife, moved by André's prepossessing appearance and dejected air, kindly invited him to partake. He declined, alleging that he had no appetite. Glancing at his gold-laced crimson coat, the good dame apologized for her rustic fare. "O, madam," exclaimed poor André with a melancholy shake of the head, "it is all very good—but, indeed, I cannot eat!"

This was related to us by a venerable matron, who was present on the occasion, a young girl at the time, but who in her old days could not recall the scene and the appearance of André without tears.

The captors with their prisoner being arrived at North Castle, Lieutenant-colonel Jameson, who was in command there, recognized the handwriting of Arnold in the papers found upon André, and, perceiving that they were of a dangerous nature, sent them off by express to General Washington, at Hartford.

André, still adhering to his assumed name, begged that the commander at West Point might be informed that John Anderson, though bearing his passport, was detained.

Jameson appears completely to have lost his head on the occasion. He wrote to Arnold, stating the circumstances of the arrest, and that the papers found upon the prisoner had been despatched by express to the commander-in-chief, and at the same time, he sent the prisoner himself, under a strong guard, to accompany the letter.*

Shortly afterwards, Major Tallmadge, next in command to Jameson, but of a much clearer head, arrived at North Castle, having been absent on duty to White Plains. When the circumstances of the case were related to him, he at once suspected treachery on the part of Arnold. At his earnest entreaties, an express was sent after the officer who had André in charge, ordering him to bring the latter back to North Castle; but by singular perversity or obtuseness in judgment, Jameson neglected to countermand the letter which he had written to Arnold.

When André was brought back, and was pacing up and down the room, Tallmadge saw at once by his air and movements, and the mode of turning on his heel, that he was a military man. By his advice, and under his escort, the prisoner was conducted to Colonel Sheldon's post at Lower Salem, as more secure than North Castle.

Here André, being told that the papers found upon his person had been forwarded to Washington, addressed to him immediately the following lines :—

* Sparks' *Arnold*. We would note generally, that we are indebted to Mr. Sparks' work for many particulars given by us of this tale of treason

"I beg your Excellency will be persuaded that no alteration in the temper of my mind or apprehensions for my safety, induces me to take the step of addressing you; but that it is to secure myself from the imputation of having assumed a mean character for treacherous purposes or self-interest. . . . . It is to vindicate my fame that I speak, and not to solicit security.

"The person in your possession is Major John André, adjutant-general of the British army.

"The influence of one commander in the army of his adversary is an advantage taken in war. A correspondence for this purpose I held; as confidential (in the present instance) with his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton. To favor it, I agreed to meet upon ground not within the posts of either army, a person who was to give me intelligence. I came up in the *Vulture* man-of-war for this effect, and was fetched from the shore to the beach. Being there, I was told that the approach of day would prevent my return, and that I must be concealed until the next night. I was in my regimentals, and had fairly risked my person.

"Against my stipulation, my intention, and without my knowledge beforehand, I was conducted within one of your posts. Thus was I betrayed into the vile condition of an enemy within your posts.

"Having avowed myself a British officer, I have nothing to reveal but what relates to myself, which is true, on the honor of an officer and a gentleman.

"The request I have made to your Excellency, and I am conscious that I address myself well, is, that in any rigor policy may dictate, a decency of conduct towards me may mark, that, though unfortunate, I am branded with nothing dishonorable; as no motive could be mine but the service of my king, and as I was involuntarily an impostor."

This letter he submitted to the perusal of Major Tallmadge, who was surprised and agitated at finding the rank and importance of the prisoner he had in charge. The letter being despatched, and André's pride relieved on a sensitive point, he resumed his serenity, apparently unconscious of the awful responsibility of his situation. Having a talent for caricature, he even amused himself in the course of the day by making a ludicrous sketch of himself and his rustic escort under march, and presenting it to an officer in the room with him. "This," said he gayly, "will give you an idea of the style in which I have had the honor to be conducted to my present abode."

NOTE.

André's propensity for caricature had recently been indulged in a mock heroic poem in three cantos, celebrating an attack upon a British picket by Wayne, with the driving into the American camp of a drove of cattle by Lee's dragoons. It is written with great humor, and is full of grotesque imagery. "Mad Anthony" especially is in broad caricature, and represented to have lost his horse upon the great occasion.

"His horse that carried all his prog,
His military speeches,
His cornstalk whiskey for his grog—
Blue stockings and brown breeches."

The cantos were published at different times in Rivington's *Gazette.* It so happened that the last canto appeared on the very day of André's capture and ended with the following stanza, which might be considered ominous :

"And now I've closed my epic strain,
I tremble as I show it,
Lest this same warrio-drover, Wayne,
Should ever catch the post."

CHAPTER X.

INTERVIEW OF WASHINGTON WITH THE FRENCH OFFICERS AT HARTFORD.—PLAN OF ATTACK DISCONCERTED.—WASHINGTON'S RETURN.—SCENES AT ARNOLD'S HEAD-QUARTERS IN THE HIGHLANDS.—TIDINGS OF ANDRÉ'S CAPTURE.—FLIGHT OF ARNOLD.—LETTERS FROM THE TRAITOR.—WASHINGTON'S PRECAUTIONS.—SITUATION OF MRS. ARNOLD.

N the very day that the treasonable conference between Arnold and André took place, on the banks of Haverstraw Bay, Washington had his interview with the French officers at Hartford. It led to no important result. Intelligence was received that the squadron of the Count de Guichen, on which they had relied to give them superiority by sea, had sailed for Europe. This disconcerted their plans, and Washington, in consequence, set out two or three days sooner than had been anticipated on his return to his head-quarters on the Hudson. He was accompanied by Lafayette and General Knox with their suites; also, part of the way, by Count Matthew Dumas, aide-de-camp to Rochambeau. The count, who regarded Washington with an enthusiasm which appears to have been felt by many of the young French officers, gives an animated picture of the manner in which he was greeted in one of the towns through

which they passed. "We arrived there," says he, "at night; the whole population had sallied forth beyond the suburbs. We were surrounded by a crowd of children carrying torches, and reiterating the acclamations of the citizens; all were eager to touch the person of him whom they hailed with loud cries as their father, and they thronged before us so as almost to prevent our moving onward. General Washington, much affected, paused a few moments, and pressing my hand, 'We may be beaten by the English,' said he, 'it is the chance of war; but there is the army they will never conquer!'"

These few words speak that noble confidence in the enduring patriotism of his countrymen, which sustained him throughout all the fluctuating fortunes of the Revolution; yet at this very moment it was about to receive one of the cruelest of wounds.

On approaching the Hudson, Washington took a more circuitous route than the one he had originally intended, striking the river at Fishkill just above the Highlands, that he might visit West Point, and show the marquis the works which had been erected there during his absence in France. Circumstances detained them a night at Fishkill. Their baggage was sent on to Arnold's quarters in the Robinson House, with a message apprising the general that they would breakfast there the next day. In the morning (September 24th) they were in the saddle before break of day, having a ride to make of eighteen miles through the mountains. It was a pleasant and ani-

mated one. Washington was in excellent spirits, and the buoyant marquis, and genial, warm-hearted Knox, were companions with whom he was always disposed to unbend.

When within a mile of the Robinson House, Washington turned down a cross road leading to the banks of the Hudson. Lafayette apprised him that he was going out of the way, and hinted that Mrs. Arnold must be waiting breakfast for him. "Ah, marquis!" replied he good-humoredly, "you young men are all in love with Mrs. Arnold. I see you are eager to be with her as soon as possible. Go you and breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me. I must ride down and examine the redoubts on this side of the river, but will be with her shortly."

The marquis and General Knox, however, turned off and accompanied him down to the redoubts, while Colonel Hamilton and Lafayette's aide-de-camp, Major James McHenry, continued along the main road to the Robinson House, bearing Washington's apology, and request that the breakfast might not be retarded.

The family with the two aides-de-camp sat down to breakfast. Mrs. Arnold had arrived but four or five days previously from Philadelphia, with her infant child, then about six months old. She was bright and amiable as usual. Arnold was silent and gloomy. It was an anxious moment with him. This was the day appointed for the consummation of the plot, when the enemy's ships were

to ascend the river. The return of the commander-in-chief from the East two days sooner than had been anticipated, and his proposed visit to the forts, threatened to disconcert everything. What might be the consequence Arnold could not conjecture. An interval of fearful imaginings was soon brought to a direful close. In the midst of the repast a horseman alighted at the gate. It was the messenger bearing Jameson's letter to Arnold, stating the capture of André, and that dangerous papers found on him had been forwarded to Washington.

The mine had exploded beneath Arnold's feet; yet in this awful moment he gave an evidence of that quickness of mind which had won laurels for him when in the path of duty. Controlling the dismay that must have smitten him to the heart, he beckoned Mrs. Arnold from the breakfast-table, signifying a wish to speak with her in private. When alone with her in her room up stairs, he announced in hurried words that he was a ruined man, and must instantly fly for his life! Overcome by the shock, she fell senseless on the floor. Without pausing to aid her, he hurried down stairs, sent the messenger to her assistance, probably to keep him from an interview with the other officers; returned to the breakfast-room, and informed his guests that he must haste to West Point to prepare for the reception of the commander-in-chief: and mounting the horse of the messenger, which stood saddled at the door, galloped down by what is still called Arnold's Path, to the landing-place, where his six-

oared barge was moored. Throwing himself into it, he ordered his men to pull out into the middle of the river, and then made down with all speed for Teller's Point, which divides Haverstraw Bay from the Tappan Sea, saying he must be back soon to meet the commander-in-chief.

Washington arrived at the Robinson House shortly after the flight of the traitor. Being informed that Mrs. Arnold was in her room, unwell, and that Arnold had gone to West Point to receive him, he took a hasty breakfast and repaired to the fortress, leaving word that he and his suite would return to dinner.

In crossing the river, he noticed that no salute was fired from the fort, nor was there any preparation to receive him on his landing. Colonel Lamb, the officer in command, who came down to the shore, manifested surprise at seeing him, and apologized for this want of military ceremony, by assuring him he had not been apprised of his intended visit.

"Is not General Arnold here?" demanded Washington.

"No, sir. He has not been here for two days past; nor have I heard from him in that time."

This was strange and perplexing, but no sinister suspicion entered Washington's mind. He remained at the Point throughout the morning, inspecting the fortifications. In the meantime, the messenger whom Jameson had despatched to Hartford with a letter covering the papers taken on André, arrived at the Robinson House.

He had learnt, while on the way to Hartford, that Washington had left that place, whereupon he turned bridle to overtake him, but missed him in consequence of the general's change of route. Coming by the lower road, the messenger had passed through Salem, where André was confined, and brought with him the letter written by that unfortunate officer to the commander-in-chief, the purport of which has already been given. These letters being represented as of the utmost moment, were opened and read by Colonel Hamilton, as Washington's aide-de-camp and confidential officer. He maintained silence as to their contents; met Washington, as he and his companions were coming up from the river, on their return from West Point, spoke to him a few words in a low voice, and they retired together into the house. Whatever agitation Washington may have felt when these documents of deep-laid treachery were put before him, he wore his usual air of equanimity when he rejoined his companions. Taking Knox and Lafayette aside, he communicated to them the intelligence, and placed the papers in their hands. "Whom can we trust now?" was his only comment, but it spoke volumes.

His first idea was to arrest the traitor. Conjecturing the direction of his flight, he despatched Colonel Hamilton on horseback to spur with all speed to Verplanck's Point, which commands the narrow part of the Hudson, just below the Highlands, with orders to the commander to intercept Anrold should he not already have passed

that post. This done, when dinner was announced, he invited the company to table. "Come, gentlemen; since Mrs. Arnold is unwell, and the general is absent, let us sit down without ceremony." The repast was a quiet one, for none but Lafayette and Knox, beside the general, knew the purport of the letters just received.

In the meantime, Arnold, panic-stricken, had sped his caitiff flight through the Highlands; infamy howling in his rear; arrest threatening him in the advance; a fugitive past the posts which he had recently commanded; shrinking at the sight of that flag which hitherto it had been his glory to defend! Alas! how changed from the Arnold, who, but two years previously, when repulsed, wounded and crippled, before the walls of Quebec, could yet write proudly from a shattered camp, "I am in the way of my duty, and I know no fear!"

He had passed through the Highlands in safety, but there were the batteries at Verplanck's Point yet to fear. Fortunately for him, Hamilton, with the order for his arrest, had not arrived there.

His barge was known by the garrison. A white handkerchief displayed gave it the sanction of a flag of truce: it was suffered to pass without question, and the traitor effected his escape to the *Vulture* sloop-of-war, anchored a few miles below. As if to consummate his degradation by a despicable act of treachery and meanness, he gave up to the commander his coxswain and six bargemen as prisoners of war. We are happy to add, that this perfidy

excited the scorn of the British officers; and, when it was found that the men had supposed they were acting under the protection of a flag, they were released by order of Sir Henry Clinton.

Colonel Hamilton returned to the Robinson House and reported the escape of the traitor. He brought two letters also to Washington, which had been sent on shore from the *Vulture*, under a flag of truce. One was from Arnold, of which the following is a transcript:—

"Sir,—The heart which is conscious of its own rectitude, cannot attempt to palliate a step which the world may censure as wrong; I have ever acted from a principle of love to my country, since the commencement of the present unhappy contest between Great Britain and the colonies; the same principle of love to my country actuates my present conduct, however it may appear inconsistent to the world, who seldom judge right of any man's actions.

"I ask no favor for myself. I have too often experienced the ingratitude of my country to attempt it; but, from the known humanity of your Excellency, I am induced to ask your protection for Mrs. Arnold from every insult and injury that a mistaken vengeance of my country may expose her to. It ought to fall only on me; she is as good and as innocent as an angel, and is incapable of doing wrong. I beg she may be permitted to return to her friends in Philadelphia, or to come to me as she may choose; from your Excellency I have no fears on

ner account, but she may suffer from the mistaken fury of the country."

The other letter was from Colonel Beverley Robinson, interceding for the release of André, on the plea that he was on shore under the sanction of a flag of truce, at the request of Arnold. Robinson had hoped to find favor with Washington on the score of their early intimacy.

Notwithstanding Washington's apparent tranquillity and real self-possession, it was a time of appalling distrust. How far the treason had extended; who else might be implicated in it, was unknown. Arnold had escaped, and was actually on board of the *Vulture;* he knew everything about the condition of the posts: might he not persuade the enemy, in the present weak state of the garrisons, to attempt a *coup de main?* Washington instantly, therefore, despatched a letter to Colonel Wade, who was in temporary command at West Point. "General Arnold is gone to the enemy," writes he. "I have just now received a line from him inclosing one to Mrs. Arnold, dated on board the *Vulture.* I request that you will be as vigilant as possible, and as the enemy may have it in contemplation to attempt some enterprise, *even to-night,* against these posts, I wish you to make, immediately after the receipt of this, the best disposition you can of your force, so as to have a proportion of men in each work on the west side of the river."

A regiment stationed in the Highlands was ordered to the same duty, as well as a body of the Massachusetts

militia from Fishkill. At half-past seven in the evening, Washington wrote to General Greene, who, in his absence, commanded the army at Tappan; urging him to put the left division in motion as soon as possible, with orders to proceed to King's Ferry, where, or before they should arrive there, they would be met with further orders. "The division," writes he, "will come on light, leaving their heavy baggage to follow. You will also hold all the troops in readiness to move on the shortest notice. Transactions of a most interesting nature, and such as will astonish you, have been just discovered."

His next thought was about André. He was not acquainted with him personally, and the intrigues in which he had been engaged, and the errand on which he had come, made him consider him an artful and resolute person. He had possessed himself of dangerous information, and in a manner had been arrested with the key of the citadel in his pocket. On the same evening, therefore, Washington wrote to Colonel Jameson, charging that every precaution should be taken to prevent Major André from making his escape. "He will no doubt effect it, if possible; and in order that he may not have it in his power, you will send him under the care of such a party and so many officers as to preclude him from the least opportunity of doing it. That he may be less liable to be recaptured by the enemy, who will no doubt make every effort to regain him, he had better be conducted

to this place by some upper road, rather than by the route of Crompond. I would not wish Mr. André to be treated with insult; but he does not appear to stand upon the footing of a common prisoner of war, and, therefore, he is not entitled to the usual indulgences which they receive, and is to be most closely and narrowly watched."

In the meantime, Mrs. Arnold remained in her room in a state bordering on frenzy. Arnold might well confide in the humanity and delicacy of Washington in respect to her. He regarded her with the sincerest commiseration, acquitting her of all previous knowledge of her husband's guilt. On remitting to her, by one of his aides-de-camp, the letter of her husband, written from on board of the *Vulture*, he informed her that he had done all that depended upon himself to have him arrested, but not having succeeded, he experienced a pleasure in assuring her of his safety.*

A letter of Hamilton's written at the time, with all the sympathies of a young man, gives a touching picture of Washington's first interview with her. "She for a time entirely lost herself. The general went up to see her, and she upbraided him with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears, sometimes she pressed her infant to her bosom, and lamented its fate occasioned by the impru-

* *Memoirs* of Lafayette, vol. i. p. 264.

dence of its father, in a manner that would have pierced insensibility itself. All the sweetness of beauty, all the loveliness of innocence, all the tenderness of a wife, and all the fondness of a mother, showed themselves in her appearance and conduct."

During the brief time she remained at the Robinson House, she was treated with the utmost deference and delicacy, but soon set off, under a passport of Washington, for her father's house in Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XI.

ANDRÉ'S CONDUCT AS A PRISONER.—HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH COLONEL TALLMADGE.—STORY OF NATHAN HALE.—ANDRÉ'S PRISON AT TAPPAN.—CORRESPONDENCE ON HIS BEHALF.—HIS TRIAL.—EXECUTION.—REWARD OF THE CAPTORS.—REWARD OF ARNOLD.—HIS PROCLAMATION.—AFTER FORTUNES OF MRS. ARNOLD.

N the 26th of September, the day after the treason of Arnold had been revealed to Washington, André arrived at the Robinson House, having been brought on in the night, under escort and in charge of Major Tallmadge. Washington made many inquiries of the major, but declined to have the prisoner brought into his presence, apparently entertaining a strong idea of his moral obliquity, from the nature of the scheme in which he had been engaged, and the circumstances under which he had been arrested.

The same evening he transmitted him to West Point, and shortly afterwards, Joshua H. Smith, who had likewise been arrested. Still, not considering them secure even there, he determined on the fcllowing day to send them on to the camp. In a letter to Greene he writes: "They will be under an escort of horse, and I wish you to have separate houses in camp ready for their reception,

in which they may be kept perfectly secure; and also strong, trusty guards, trebly officered, that a part may be constantly in the room with them. They have not been permitted to be together, and must be kept apart. I would wish the room for Mr. André to be a decent one, and that he may be treated with civility; but that he may be so guarded as to preclude a possibility of his escaping, which he will certainly attempt to effect, if it shall seem practicable in the most distant degree."

Major Tallmadge continued to have charge of André. Not regarding him from the same anxious point with the commander-in-chief, and having had opportunities of acquiring a personal knowledge of him, he had become fascinated by his engaging qualities. "The ease and affability of his manners," writes he, "polished by the refinement of good society and a finished education, made him a most delightful companion. It often drew tears from my eyes, to find him so agreeable in conversation on different subjects, when I reflected on his future fate, and that too, as I feared, so near at hand."

Early on the morning of the 28th, the prisoners were embarked in a barge, to be conveyed from West Point to King's Ferry. Tallmadge placed André by his side on the after seat of the barge. Both being young, of equal rank, and prepossessing manners, a frank and cordial intercourse had grown up between them. By a cartel, mutually agreed upon, each might put to the other any question not involving a third person. They were pass

ing below the rocky heights of West Point, and in full view of the fortress, when Tallmadge asked André whether he would have taken an active part in the attack on it, should Arnold's plan have succeeded. André promptly answered in the affirmative ; pointed out a table of land on the west shore, where he would have landed at the head of a select corps, described the route he would have taken up the mountain to a height in the rear of Fort Putnam, overlooking the whole parade of West Point—" and this he did," writes Tallmadge, " with much greater exactness than I could have done. This eminence he would have reached without difficulty, as Arnold would have disposed of the garrison in such manner as to be capable of little or no opposition—*and then the key of the country would have been in his hands, and he would have had the glory of the splendid achievement.*"

Tallmadge fairly kindled into admiration as André, with hereditary French vivacity, acted the scene he was describing. " It seemed to him," he said, " as if André were entering the fort sword in hand."

He ventured to ask what was to have been his reward had he succeeded. " Military glory was all he sought. The thanks of his general and the approbation of his king would have been a rich reward for such an undertaking."

Tallmadge was perfectly charmed, but adds quietly, " I think he further remarked, that, if he had succeeded, *he was to have been promoted to the rank of a brigadier-general.*"

While thus the prisoner, confident of the merit of what he had attempted, kindled with the idea of an imaginary triumph, and the youthful officer who had him in charge caught fire from his enthusiasm, the barge glided through that solemn defile of mountains, through which, but a few days previously, Arnold, the panic-stricken traitor of the drama, had fled like a felon.

After disembarking at King's Ferry near Stony Point, they set off for Tappan under the escort of a body of horse. As they approached the Clove, a deep defile in the rear of the Highlands, André, who rode beside Tallmadge, became solicitous to know the opinion of the latter as to what would be the result of his capture, and in what light he would be regarded by General Washington and by a military tribunal, should one be ordered. Tallmadge evaded the question as long as possible, but being urged to a full and explicit reply, gave it, he says, in the following words: "I had a much-loved classmate in Yale College, by the name of Nathan Hale, who entered the army in 1775. Immediately after the battle of Long Island, General Washington wanted information respecting the strength, position, and probable movements of the enemy. Captain Hale tendered his services, went over to Brooklyn, and was taken, just as he was passing the outposts of the enemy on his return; said I with emphasis—'Do you remember the sequel of the story?' 'Yes,' said André. 'He was hanged as a spy! But you surely do not con-

sider his case and mine alike?' 'Yes, precisely similar; and similar will be your fate.'" *

* The fate of the heroic youth here alluded to, deserves a more ample notice. Born in Coventry, Connecticut, June 6th, 1755, he entered Yale College in 1770, and graduated with some distinction in September, 1773, having previously contracted an engagement of marriage; not unlike André in this respect, who wooed his "Honora," at eighteen. On quitting college he engaged as a teacher, as is common with young men in New England, while studying for a profession. His half-formed purpose was to devote himself to the ministry. As a teacher of youth, he was eminently skillful, and equally appreciated by parents and pupils. He became universally popular. "Everybody loved him," said a lady of his acquaintance, "he was so sprightly, intelligent and kind, and *so* handsome."

He was teaching at New London, when an express arrived bringing tidings of the outbreak at Lexington. A town meeting was called, and Hale was among the most ardent of the speakers, proposing an instant march to the scene of hostilities, and offering to volunteer. "A sense of duty," writes he to his father, "urges me to sacrifice everything for my country."

He served in the army before Boston as lieutenant; prevailed on his company to extend their term of service by offering them his own pay, and for his good conduct received from Congress the commission of captain. He commanded a company in Colonel Knowlton's regiment in the following year. After the disastrous battle of Long Island, Washington applied to that officer for a competent person to penetrate the enemy's camp, and procure intelligence of their designs; a service deemed vital in that dispiriting crisis. Hale, in the ardor of patriotism, volunteered for the unenviable enterprise, though fully aware of its peril, and the consequences of capture.

Assuming his old character as schoolmaster, he crossed the Sound at night from Norwalk to Huntington on Long Island, visited the British encampments unsuspected, made drawings of the enemy's works, and noted down memoranda in Latin of the information he gathered, and then retraced his steps to Huntington, where a boat was to meet him and convey him back to the Connecticut shore. Unfortunately a British guard ship was at that time anchored out of view in the Sound, and had sent a boat on shore for water. Hale mistook it for the expected boat, and did not discover his mistake until he found himself in the hands of enemies.

"He endeavored," adds Tallmadge, "to answer my remarks, but it was manifest he was more troubled in spirit than I had ever seen him before."

"We stopped at the Clove to dine and let the horse-guard refresh," continues Tallmadge. "While there, André kept reviewing his shabby dress, and finally remarked to me, that he was positively ashamed to go to the head-quarters of the American army in such a plight. I called my servant and directed him to bring my dragoon cloak, which I presented to Major André. This he refused for some time; but I insisted on it, and he finally put it on and rode in it to Tappan."

The place which had been prepared to receive Major André, is still pointed out as the "76 Stone House." The caution which Washington had given as to his safe keeping, was strictly observed by Colonel Scammel, the adjutant-general, as may be seen by his orders to the officer of the guards.

"Major André, the prisoner under your guard, is not

He was stripped and searched, the plans and memoranda were found concealed in the soles of his shoes, and proved him to be a spy.

He was conveyed to the guard ship, and thence to New York, where he was landed on the 21st of September, the day of the great fire. He was taken to General Howe's head-quarters, and, after brief parley with his judge, ordered for execution the next morning at daybreak—a sentence carried out by the provost marshal, the brutal and infamous Cunningham, who refused his request for a Bible, and destroyed a letter he had addressed to his mother, for the reason afterwards given by himself, "that the rebels should never know they had a man who could die with such firmness." His patriot spirit shone forth in his dying words,—"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

only an officer of distinction in the British army, but a man of infinite art and address, who will leave no means unattempted to make his escape and avoid the ignominious death which awaits him. You are therefore, in addition to your sentries, to keep two officers constantly in the room with him, with their swords drawn, whilst the other officers who are out of the room are constantly to keep walking the entry and around the sentries, to see that they are alert. No person whatever to be permitted to enter the room, or speak with him, unless by direction of the commander-in-chief. You are by no means to suffer him to go out of the room on any pretext whatever." *

The capture of André caused a great sensation at New York. He was universally popular with the army, and an especial favorite of Sir Henry Clinton. The latter addressed a letter to Washington on the 29th, claiming the release of André on similar ground to that urged by Colonel Robinson—his having visited Arnold at the particular request of that general officer, and under the sanction of a flag of truce; and his having been stopped while travelling under Arnold's passports. The same letter inclosed one addressed by Arnold to Sir Henry, and intended as a kind of certificate of the innocence of André. "I commanded at the time at West Point," writes the renegade, "had an undoubted right to send my flag of truce to Major André, who came to me under that pro-

* From a copy among the papers of General Hand.

tection, and, having held conversation with him, I delivered him confidential papers in my own handwriting to deliver to your Excellency. Thinking it much properer he should return by land, I directed him to make use of the feigned name of John Anderson, under which he had, by my direction, come on shore, and gave him my passports to go to the White Plains, on his way to New York. . . . . All which I had then a right to do, being in the actual service of America, under the orders of General Washington, and commanding general at West Point and its dependencies." He concludes, therefore, that André cannot fail of being immediately sent to New York.

Neither the official demand of Sir Henry Clinton, nor the impudent certificate of Arnold, had any effect on the steady mind of Washington. He considered the circumstances under which André had been taken such as would have justified the most summary proceedings, but he determined to refer the case to the examination and decision of a board of general officers, which he convened on the 29th of September, the day after his arrival at Tappan. It was composed of six major-generals, Greene, Stirling, St. Clair, Lafayette, R. Howe, and Steuben; and eight brigadiers, Parsons, James Clinton, Knox, Glover, Paterson, Hand, Huntingdon, and Stark. General Greene, who was well versed in military law, and was a man of sound head and kind heart, was president, and Colonel John Lawrence, judge advocate-general.

Colonel Alexander Hamilton, who, like Tallmadge, had drawn to André in his misfortunes, as had most of the young American officers, gives, in letters to his friends, many interesting particulars concerning the conduct of the prisoner. "When brought before the board of officers," writes he, "he met with every mark of indulgence and was required to answer no interrogatory which would even embarrass his feelings. On his part, while he carefully concealed everything that might implicate others, he frankly confessed all the facts relating to himself, and upon his confession, without the trouble of examining a witness, the board made up their report."

It briefly stated the circumstances of the case, and concluded with the opinion of the court, that Major André, adjutant-general of the British army, ought to be considered a spy from the enemy, and, agreeably to the law and usage of nations, ought to suffer death. In a conversation with Hamilton, André acknowledged the candor, liberality, and indulgence with which the board had conducted themselves in their painful inquiry. He met the result with manly firmness. "I foresee my fate," said he; "and though I pretend not to play the hero, or to be indifferent about life, yet I am reconciled to whatever may happen; conscious that misfortune, not guilt, has brought it upon me."

Even in this situation of gathering horrors, he thought of others more than of himself. "There is only one thing that disturbs my tranquillity," said he to Hamilton. "Sir

Henry Clinton has been too good to me; he has been lavish of his kindness. I am bound to him by too many obligations, and love him too well, to bear the thought that he should reproach himself, or others should reproach him, on the supposition of my having conceived myself obliged, by his instructions, to run the risk I did. I would not for the world leave a sting in his mind that should embitter his future days." He could scarce finish the sentence; bursting into tears, in spite of his efforts to suppress them, and with difficulty collected himself enough afterwards to add, "I wish to be permitted to assure him that I did not act under this impression, but submitted to a necessity imposed upon me, as contrary to my own inclination, as to his wishes."

His request was complied with, and he wrote a letter to Sir Henry Clinton to the above purport. He made mention also of his mother and three sisters, to whom the value of his commission would be an object. "It is needless," said he, "to be more explicit on this subject; I am persuaded of your Excellency's goodness." *

He concluded by saying, "I receive the greatest attention from his Excellency, General Washington, and from every person under whose charge I happen to be placed."

This letter accompanied one from Washington to Sir

* The commission was sold by Sir Henry Clinton, for the benefit of André's mother and sisters. The king, also, settled a pension on the mother, and offered to confer the honor of knighthood on André's brother, in order to wipe away all stain from the family, that the circumstance of his fate might be thought to occasion.

Henry Clinton, stating the report of the board of inquiry, omitting the sentence. "From these proceedings," observes he, "it is evident that Major André was employed in the execution of measures very foreign to the objects of flags of truce, and such as they were never meant to authorize in the most distant degree; and this gentleman confessed with the greatest candor, in the course of his examination, that it was impossible for him to suppose that he came on shore under the sanction of a flag."

Captain Aaron Ogden, a worthy officer of the New Jersey line, was selected by Washington to bear these despatches to the enemy's post at Paulus Hook, thence to be conveyed across the Hudson to New York. Before his departure, he called by Washington's request on the Marquis Lafayette, who gave him instructions to sound the officer commanding at that post whether Sir Henry Clinton might not be willing to deliver up Arnold in exchange for André. Ogden arrived at Paulus Hook in the evening, and made the suggestion, as if incidentally, in the course of conversation. The officer demanded if he had any authority from Washington for such an intimation. "I have no such assurance from General Washington," replied he, "but I am prepared to say, that if such a proposal were made, I believe it would be accepted, and Major André set at liberty."

The officer crossed the river before morning, and communicated the matter to Sir Henry Clinton, but the lat-

ter instantly rejected the expedient as incompatible with honor and military principle.

In the meantime, the character, appearance, deportment, and fortunes of André, had interested the feelings of the oldest and sternest soldiers around him, and completely captivated the sympathies of the younger ones. He was treated with the greatest respect and kindness throughout his confinement, and his table was supplied from that of the commander-in-chief.

Hamilton, who was in daily intercourse with him, describes him as well improved by education and travel, with an elegant turn of mind, and a taste for the fine arts. He had attained some proficiency in poetry, music, and painting. His sentiments were elevated, his elocution was fluent, his address easy, polite, and engaging, with a softness that conciliated affection. His talents and accomplishments were accompanied, says Hamilton, by a diffidence that induced you to give him credit for more than appeared.

No one felt stronger sympathy in his case than Colonel Tallmadge, no doubt from the consideration that he had been the means of bringing him into this awful predicament, by inducing Colonel Jameson to have him conducted back when on the way to Arnold's quarters. A letter lies before us, written by Tallmadge to Colonel Samuel B. Webb, one of Washington's aides-de-camp. "Poor André, who has been under my charge almost ever since he was taken, has yesterday had his trial, and

though his sentence is not known, a disgraceful death is undoubtedly allotted him. By Heavens, Colonel Webb, I never saw a man whose fate I foresaw whom I so sincerely pitied. He is a young fellow of the greatest accomplishments, and was the prime minister of Sir Harry on all occasions. He has unbosomed his heart to me so fully, and indeed let me know almost every motive of his actions since he came out on his late mission, that he has endeared me to him exceedingly. Unfortunate man! He will undoubtedly suffer death to-morrow; and though he knows his fate, seems to be as cheerful as if he were going to an assembly. I am sure he will go to the gallows less fearful for his fate, and with less concern than I shall behold the tragedy. Had he been tried by a court of ladies, he is so genteel, handsome, polite a young gentleman, that I am confident they would have acquitted him. But enough of André, who, though he dies lamented, falls justly."

The execution was to have taken place on the 1st of October, at five o'clock in the afternoon; but in the interim Washington received a second letter from Sir Henry Clinton, dated September 30th, expressing an opinion that the board of inquiry had not been rightly informed of all the circumstances on which a judgment ought to be formed, and that, in order that he might be perfectly apprised of the state of the matter before he proceeded to put that judgment in execution, he should send a commission on the following day, composed of Lieutenant-governor

Elliot, William Smith, chief justice of the province, and Lieutenant-general Robertson, to wait near Dobb's Ferry, for permission and safe conduct to meet Washington, or such persons as he should appoint to converse with them on the subject.

This letter caused a postponement of the execution, and General Greene was sent to meet the commissioners at Dobb's Ferry. They came up in the morning of the 1st of October, in a schooner, with a flag of truce, and were accompanied by Colonel Beverley Robinson. General Robertson, however, was the only commissioner permitted to land, the others not being military officers. A long conference took place between him and General Greene, without any agreement of opinion upon the question at issue. Greene returned to camp promising to report faithfully to Washington the arguments urged by Robertson, and to inform the latter of the result.

A letter also was delivered to Greene for Washington, which Arnold had sent by the commissioners, in which the traitor reasserted the right he had possessed, as commanding officer of the department, to transact all the matters with which André was inculpated, and insisted that the latter ought not to suffer for them. "But," added he, "if after this just and candid representation of Major André's case, the board of general officers adhere to their former opinion, I shall suppose it dictated by passion and resentment; and if that gentleman should suffer the severity of their sentence, I shall think myself

bound, by every tie of duty and honor, to retaliate on such unhappy persons of your army as may fall within my power, that the respect due to flags, and to the laws of nations, may be better understood and observed. I have further to observe, that forty of the principal inhabitants of South Carolina have justly forfeited their lives, which have hitherto been spared by the clemency of his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton, who cannot in justice extend his mercy to them any longer, if Major André suffers; which, in all probability, will open a scene of blood at which humanity shudders.

"Suffer me to entreat your Excellency, for your own sake and the honor of humanity, and the love you have of justice, that you suffer not an unjust sentence to touch the life of Major André. But if this warning should be disregarded, and he suffer, I call Heaven and earth to witness that your Excellency will be justly answerable for the torrent of blood that may be spilt in consequence."

Beside this impudent and despicable letter, there was another from Arnold, containing the farce of a resignation, and concluding with the following sentence: "At the same time I beg leave to assure your Excellency, that my attachment to the true interests of my country is invariable, and that I am actuated by the same principle which has ever been the governing rule of my conduct in this unhappy contest."

The letters of Arnold were regarded with merited contempt. Greene, in a brief letter to General Robertson,

informed him that he had made as full a report of their conference to the commander-in-chief, as his memory would serve, but that it had made no alteration in Washington's opinion and determination. Robertson was piqued at the brevity of the note, and professed to doubt whether Greene's memory had served him with sufficient fullness and exactness; he addressed therefore to Washington his own statement of reasoning on the subject; after despatching which he and the other commissioners returned in the schooner to New York.

During this day of respite André had conducted himself with his usual tranquillity. A likeness of himself, seated at a table in his guard-room, which he sketched with a pen and gave to the officer on guard, is still extant. It being announced to him that one o'clock on the following day was fixed on for his execution, he remarked that, since it was his lot to die, there was still a choice in the mode; he therefore addressed the following note to Washington :—

"Sir,—Buoyed above the terror of death by the consciousness of a life devoted to honorable pursuits, and stained with no action that can give me remorse, I trust that the request I make to your Excellency at this serious period, and which is to soften my last moments, will not be rejected. Sympathy towards a soldier will surely induce your Excellency and a military tribunal to adapt the mode of my death to the feelings of a man of honor.

"Let me hope, sir, that if aught in my character impresses you with esteem towards me; if aught in my misfortunes marks me as the victim of policy and not of resentment, I shall experience the operation of these feelings in your breast by being informed that I am not to die on a gibbet."

Had Washington consulted his feelings merely, this affecting appeal might not have been in vain, for though not impulsive, he was eminently benevolent. André himself had testified to the kind treatment he had experienced from the commander-in-chief since his capture, though no personal interview had taken place. Washington had no popular censure to apprehend should he exercise indulgence, for the popular feeling was with the prisoner. But he had a high and tenacious sense of the duties and responsibilities of his position, and never more than in this trying moment, when he had to elevate himself above the contagious sympathies of those around him, dismiss all personal considerations, and regard the peculiar circumstances of the case. The long course of insidious operations which had been pursued to undermine the loyalty of one of his most trusted officers; the greatness of the evil which the treason would have effected, if successful; the uncertainty how far the enemy had carried, or might still be carrying, their scheme of corruption, for anonymous intimations spoke of treachery in other quarters; all these considerations pointed

this out as a case in which a signal example was required.

And what called for particular indulgence to the agent, if not instigator of this enormous crime, who had thus been providentially detected in disguise, and with the means of its consummation concealed upon his person? His errand, as it has been eloquently urged, "viewed in the light of morality, and even of that chivalry from which modern war pretends to derive its maxims, was one of infamy. He had been commissioned to buy with gold what steel could not conquer; to drive a bargain with one ready for a price to become a traitor; to count out the thirty pieces of silver by which British generals and British gentlemen were not ashamed to purchase the betrayal of a cause, whose shining virtue repelled their power, and dimmed the glory of their arms." *

Even the language of traffic in which this negotiation had been carried on between the pseudo-Gustavus and John Anderson, had, as has before been observed, something ignoble and debasing to the chivalrous aspirant who stooped to use it; especially when used as a crafty covering in bargaining for a man's soul.†

* Speech of the Hon. Henry J. Raymond, at the dedication of the André monument.

† See letter of Gustavus to John Anderson. "My partner of whom I hinted in a former letter, has about ten thousand pounds cash in hand, ready for a speculation, if any should offer; I have also one thousand pounds in hand, and can collect fifteen hundred more in two or three days. Add to this I have some credit. From these hints you can judge of the purchase that can be made."

It has been alleged in André's behalf, as a mitigating circumstance, that he was involuntarily a spy. It is true, he did not come on shore in borrowed garb, nor with a design to pass himself off for another, and procure secret information; but he came, under cloak of midnight, in supposed safety, to effect the betrayal of a holy trust; and it was his undue eagerness to secure the objects of this clandestine interview, that brought him into the condition of an undoubted spy. It certainly should not soften our view of his mission, that he embarked in it without intending to subject himself to danger. A spice of danger would have given it a spice of heroism, however spurious. When the rendezvous was first projected, he sought, through an indirect channel, to let Arnold know that he would come out with a flag. (We allude to a letter written by him from New York on the 7th of September, under his feigned signature, to Colonel Sheldon; evidently intended to be seen by Arnold; "I will endeavor to obtain permission to go out with a flag.") If an interview had taken place under that sacred protection, and a triumphant treason had been the result, what a brand it would have affixed to André's name, that he had prostituted a flag of truce to such an end.

We dwell on these matters, not to check the sentiment of sympathy awakened in André's behalf by his personal qualities, but to vindicate the fair name of Washington from that "blot" which some have attempted to cast upon it, because, in exercising his stern duty as protector of the

public weal, during a time of secret treason, he listened to policy and justice rather than mercy. In doing so, he took counsel with some of his general officers. Their opinions coincided with his own—that under present circumstances, it was important to give a signal warning to the enemy, by a rigorous observance of the rules of war and the usages of nations in like cases.*

But although André's request as to the mode of his death was not to be granted, it was thought best to let him remain in uncertainty on the subject; no answer, therefore, was returned to his note. On the morning of the 2d, he maintained a calm demeanor, though all around him were gloomy and silent. He even rebuked his servant for shedding tears. Having breakfasted, he dressed himself with care in the full uniform of a British officer, which he had sent for to New York, placed his hat upon the table, and accosting the officers on guard,—"I am ready," said he, "at any moment, gentlemen, to wait upon you."

* We subjoin a British officer's view of André's case. "He was tried by a board of general officers as a spy, and condemned to be hanged. The American general has been censured for directing this ignominious sentence to be carried into execution; but doubtless Major André was well aware when he undertook the negotiation, of the fate that awaited him should he fall into the hands of the enemy. The laws of war award to spies the punishment of death. It would, therefore, be difficult to assign a reason why Major André should have been exempted from that fate to which all others are doomed under similar circumstances, although the amiable qualities of the man rendered the individual case a subject of peculiar commiseration."—*Origin and Services of the Coldstream Guards:* by Col. MacKinnon, vol. ii. p. 9.

He walked to the place of execution between two subaltern officers, arm in arm, with a serene countenance, bowing to several gentlemen whom he knew. Colonel Tallmadge accompanied him, and we quote his words. "When he came within sight of the gibbet, he appeared to be startled, and inquired with some emotion whether he was not to be shot. Being informed that the mode first appointed for his death could not consistently be altered, he exclaimed, 'How hard is my fate!' but immediately added, 'it will soon be over.' I then shook hand with him under the gallows, and retired."*

While waiting near the gallows until preparations were made, says another authority, who was present, he evinced some nervousness, putting his foot on a stone and rolling it; and making an effort to swallow, as if checking an hysterical affection of the throat. All things being ready, he stepped into the wagon; appeared to shrink for an instant, recovering himself, exclaimed: "It will be but a momentary pang!"

Taking off his hat and stock, and opening his shirt collar, he deliberately adjusted the noose to his neck, after which he took out a handkerchief, and tied it over his eyes. Being told by the officer in command that his arms must be bound, he drew out a second handkerchief, with which they were pinioned. Colonel Scammel now told him that he had an opportunity to speak, if he de-

* MSS. of Col. B. Tallmadge, in possession of his daughter, Mrs. J. P. Cushman, of Troy, N. Y.

sired it. His only reply was, "I pray you to bear witness that I meet my fate like a brave man." The wagon moved from under him, and left him suspended. He died almost without a struggle.* He remained suspended for about half an hour, during which time a deathlike stillness prevailed over the surrounding multitude. His remains were interred within a few yards of the place of his execution; whence they were transferred to England in 1821, by the British consul, then resident in New York, and were buried in Westminster Abbey, near a mural monument which had been erected to his memory.

Never has any man, suffering under like circumstances, awakened a more universal sympathy even among those of the country against which he had practiced. His story is one of the touching themes of the Revolution, and his name is still spoken of with kindness in the local traditions of the neighborhood where he was captured.

Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, passed a high eulogium on the captors of André, and recommended them for a handsome gratuity; for having, in all probability, prevented one of the severest strokes that could have been meditated by the enemy. Congress accordingly expressed, in a formal vote, a high sense of their virtuous and patriotic conduct; awarded to each of them a farm, a pension for life of two hundred dollars,

* Thatcher's *Military Journal*, p. 275.

and a silver medal, bearing on one side an escutcheon on which was engraved the word FIDELITY, and on the other side the motto, *Vincit amor patriæ.* These medals were delivered to them by General Washington at head-quarters, with impressive ceremony.

Isaac Van Wart, one of the captors, had been present at the execution of André, and was deeply affected by it. He was not fond of recalling the subject, and in after life could rarely speak of André without tears.

Joshua H. Smith, who aided in bringing André and Arnold together, was tried by a court-martial, on a charge of participating in the treason, but was acquitted, no proof appearing of his having had any knowledge of Arnold's plot, though it was thought he must have been conscious of something wrong in an interview so mysteriously conducted.

Arnold was now made brigadier-general in the British service, and put on an official level with honorable men who scorned to associate with the traitor. What golden reward he was to have received had his treason been successful, is not known; but six thousand three hundred and fifteen pounds sterling were paid to him, as a compensation for losses which he pretended to have suffered in going over to the enemies of his country.

The vilest culprit, however, shrinks from sustaining the obloquy of his crimes. Shortly after his arrival in New York, Arnold published an address to the inhabitants of America, in which he endeavored to vindicate his

conduct. He alleged that he had originally taken up arms merely to aid in obtaining a redress of grievances. He had considered the Declaration of Independence precipitate, and the reasons for it obviated by the subsequent proffers of the British government; and he inveighed against Congress for rejecting those offers, without submitting them to the people.

Finally, the treaty with France, a proud, ancient and crafty foe, the enemy of the Protestant faith and of real liberty, had completed, he said, the measure of his indignation, and determined him to abandon a cause sustained by iniquity and controlled by usurpers.

Besides this address, he issued a proclamation inviting the officers and soldiers of the American army, who had the real interest of their country at heart, and who were determined to be no longer the tools and dupes of Congress, and of France, to rally under the royal standard, and fight for true American liberty; holding out promises of large bounties and liberal subsistence, with compensation for all the implements and accoutrements of war they might bring with them.

Speaking of this address, "I am at a loss," said Washington, "which to admire most, the confidence of Arnold in publishing it, or the folly of the enemy in supposing that a production signed by so infamous a character will have any weight with the people of these States, or any influence upon our officers abroad." He was right. Both the address and the proclamation were regarded by

Americans with the contempt they merited. None rallied to the standard of the renegade but a few deserters and refugees, who were already within the British lines, and prepared for any desperate or despicable service.*

Colonel John Laurens, former aide-de-camp to Washington, in speaking of André's fate, observed, "Arnold must undergo a punishment comparatively more severe,

* The following passages of a letter written by Sir Thomas Romilly in London, Dec. 12, 1780, to the Rev. John Roget, are worthy of citation :—

"What do you think of Arnold's conduct ? You may well suppose he does not want advocates here. I cannot join with them. If he thought the Americans not justified in continuing the war, after the offer of such favorable terms as the commissioners held out to them, why did he keep his command for two years afterwards ? . . . .

"The arguments used by Clinton and Arnold in their letters to Washington, to prove that André could not be considered as a spy, are, first, that he had with him, when he was taken, a protection of Arnold, who was at that time acting under a commission of the Congress, and, therefore, competent to give protections. Certainly he was, to all strangers to his negotiations with Clinton, but not to André, who knew him to be at that time a traitor to the Congress—nay, more, whose protection was granted for no other purpose but to promote and give effect to his treachery. In the second place, they say that at the time he was taken he was upon neutral ground ; but they do not deny that he had been within the American lines in disguise. The letters written by André himself, show a firm, cool intrepidity worthy a more glorious end. . . . .

"The fate of this unfortunate young man, and the manly style of his letters, have raised more compassion here than the loss of thousands in battle, and have excited a warmer indignation against the Americans, than any former act of the Congress. When the passions of men are so deeply affected, you will not expect to find them keep within the bounds of reason. Panegyrics of the gallant André are unbounded ; they call him the English Mutius, and talk of erecting monuments to his memory. Certainly, no man in his situation could have behaved with more determined courage ; but his situation was by no means such as to admit of these exaggerated praises."

in the permanent, increasing torment of a mental hell." Washington doubted it. "He wants feeling," said he. "From some traits of his character which have lately come to my knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villainy, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame, that, while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits there will be no time for remorse." And in a letter to Governor Reed, Washington writes, "Arnold's conduct is so villainously perfidious, that there are no terms that can describe the baseness of his heart. That overruling Providence which has so often and so remarkably interposed in our favor, never manifested itself more conspicuously than in the timely discovery of his horrid intention to surrender the post and garrison of West Point into the hands of the enemy. . . . . The confidence and folly which have marked the subsequent conduct of this man, are of a piece with his villainy, and all three are perfect in their kind."

Mrs. Arnold, on arriving at her father's house in Philadelphia, had decided on a separation from her husband, to whom she could not endure the thoughts of returning after his dishonor. This course, however, was not allowed her. The executive council, wrongfully suspecting her of having aided in the correspondence between her husband and André, knowing its treasonable tendency, ordered her to leave the State within fourteen days, and not to return during the continuance of the war.

"We tried every means," writes one of her connections, "to prevail on the council to permit her to stay among us, and not to compel her to go to that infernal villain, her husband.* Mr. Shippen (her father) had promised the council, and Mrs. Arnold had signed a writing to the same purpose, engaging not to write to General Arnold any letters whatever, and to receive no letters without showing them to the council, if she was permitted to stay." It was all in vain, and, strongly against her will, she rejoined her husband in New York. His fear for her personal safety from the fury of the people proved groundless. That scrupulous respect for the female sex, so prevalent throughout the United States, was her safeguard. While the whole country resounded with execrations of her husband's guilt; while his effigy was dragged through the streets of town and village, burnt at the stake, or swung on the gibbet, she passed on secure from injury or insult. The execrations of the populace were silenced at her approach. Arriving at nightfall at a village where they were preparing for one of these burnings in effigy, the pyre remained unkindled, the people dispersed quietly to their homes, and the wife of the traitor was suffered to sleep in peace.

She returned home but once, about five years after her exile, and was treated with such coldness and neglect that she declared she never could come again. In Eng-

* *Letters and Papers relating to the Provincial Hist. of Pennsylvania,* p. lxiv.

land her charms and virtues, it is said, procured her sympathy and friendship, and helped to sustain the social position of her husband, who, however, was "generally slighted, and sometimes insulted."* She died in London, in the winter of 1796. In recent years it has been maintained that Mrs. Arnold was actually cognizant and participant of her husband's crime; but, after carefully examining all the proofs adduced, we remain of opinion that she was innocent.

We have been induced to enter thus largely into the circumstances of this story, from the undiminished interest taken in it by the readers of American history. Indeed, a romance has been thrown around the memory of the unfortunate André, which increases with the progress of years; while the name of Arnold will stand sadly conspicuous to the end of time, as the only American officer of note, throughout all the trials and vicissitudes of the Revolution, who proved traitor to the glorious cause of his country.

NOTE.

The following fragment of a letter from Arnold's mother to him in early life, was recently put into our hands. Well would it have been for him had he adhered to its pious though humble counsels.

Norwich April 12 1754.

"dear childe. I received yours of 1 instant and was glad to hear that you was well: pray my dear let your first consern be to make your peace

* *Letters and Papers of Prov. Hist. Pennsylvania*, p. lxvi.

with god as itt is of all conserns of ye greatest importence. Keep a stedy watch over your thoughts, words and actions. be dutifull to superiors obliging to equalls and affibel to inferiors. . . . .

from your affectionate
Hannah Arnold.

P. S. I have sent you fifty shillings youse itt prudently as you are acountabell to God and your father. Your father and aunt joyns with me in love and servis to Mr. Cogswell and ladey and yourself Your sister is from home.

your father put
twenty more

To Mr
benedict arnold
at
canterbury

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE. PEN AND INK SKETCH.

CHAPTER XII.

GREENE TAKES COMMAND AT WEST POINT.—INSIDIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SHAKE THE CONFIDENCE OF WASHINGTON IN HIS OFFICERS.—PLAN TO ENTRAP ARNOLD.—CHARACTER OF SERGEANT CHAMPE.—COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF GATES.—GREENE APPOINTED TO THE SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT.—WASHINGTON'S INSTRUCTIONS TO HIM.—INCURSIONS FROM CANADA.—MOHAWK VALLEY RAVAGED.—STATE OF THE ARMY.—REFORMS ADOPTED.—ENLISTMENT FOR THE WAR.—HALF PAY.

AS the enemy would now possess the means, through Arnold, of informing themselves thoroughly about West Point, Washington hastened to have the works completed and strongly garrisoned. Major-general Greene was ordered to march with the Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, and Stark's brigades, and take temporary command (ultimately to be transferred to General Heath), and the Pennsylvania troops, which had been thrown into the fortress at the time of Arnold's desertion, were relieved. Washington himself took post with his main army, at Prakeness, near Passaic Falls in New Jersey.

Insidious attempts had been made by anonymous papers, and other means, as we have already hinted, to shake the confidence of the commander-in-chief in his

officers, and especially to implicate General St. Clair in the late conspiracy. Washington was exceedingly disturbed in mind for a time, and engaged Major Henry Lee, who was stationed with his dragoons on the lines, to probe the matter through secret agents in New York. The result proved the utter falsehood of these insinuations.

At the time of making this inquiry, a plan was formed at Washington's suggestion to get possession of the person of Arnold. The agent pitched upon by Lee for the purpose, was the sergeant-major of cavalry in his legion, John Champe by name, a young Virginian about twenty-four years of age, whom he describes as being rather above the middle size—full of bone and muscle; with a saturnine countenance, grave, thoughtful, and taciturn, of tried loyalty and inflexible courage. By many promises and much persuasion, Lee brought him to engage in the attempt. "I have incited his thirst for fame," writes he, "by impressing on his mind the virtue and glory of the act."

Champe was to make a pretended desertion to the enemy at New York. There he was to enlist in a corps which Arnold was raising, insinuate himself into some menial or military situation about his person, and watching for a favorable moment, was, with the aid of a confederate from Newark, to seize him in the night, gag him, and bring him across the Hudson into Bergen woods, in the Jerseys.

Washington, in approving the plan, enjoined and stipulated that Arnold should be brought to him alive. "No circumstance whatever," said he, "shall obtain my consent to his being put to death. The idea which would accompany such an event, would be, that ruffians had been hired to assassinate him. My aim is to make a public example of him, and this should be strongly impressed upon those who are employed to bring him off."

The pretended desertion of the sergeant took place on the night of October 20th, and was attended with difficulties. He had to evade patrols of horse and foot, besides stationary guards and irregular scouting parties. Major Lee could render him no assistance other than to delay pursuit, should his departure be discovered. About eleven o'clock the sergeant took his cloak, valise, and orderly book, drew his horse from the picket, and mounting, set out on his hazardous course, while the major retired to rest.

He had not been in bed half an hour, when Captain Carnes, officer of the day, hurrying into his quarters, gave word that one of the patrols had fallen in with a dragoon, who, on being challenged, put spurs to his horse, and escaped. Lee pretended to be annoyed by the intrusion, and to believe that the pretended dragoon was some countryman of the neighborhood. The captain was piqued; made a muster of the dragoons, and returned with word that the sergeant-major was missing, who had gone off with horse, baggage, arms, and orderly book.

Lee was now compelled to order out a party in pursuit under Cornet Middleton, but in so doing, he contrived so many delays, that, by the time they were in the saddle, Champe had an hour's start. His pursuers, too, were obliged, in the course of the night, to halt occasionally, dismount and examine the road, to guide themselves by the horse's tracks. At daybreak they pressed forward more rapidly, and from the summit of a hill descried Champe, not more than half a mile in front. The sergeant at the same moment caught sight of his pursuers, and now the chase became desperate. Champe had originally intended to make for Paulus Hook, but changed his course, threw his pursuers at fault, and succeeded in getting abreast of two British galleys at anchor near the shore beyond Bergen. He had no time to lose. Cornet Middleton was but two or three hundred yards behind him. Throwing himself off his horse, and running through a marsh, he plunged into the river, and called to the galleys for help. A boat was sent to his assistance, and he was conveyed on board of one of the vessels.

For a time the whole plan promised to be successful. Champe enlisted in Arnold's corps; was employed about his person; and every arrangement was made to surprise him at night in a garden in the rear of his quarters, convey him to a boat, and ferry him across the Hudson. On the appointed night, Lee, with three dragoons and three led horses, was in the woods of Hoboken, on the Jersey shore, waiting to receive the captive. Hour after hour

passed away,—no boat approached,—day broke ; and the major, with his dragoons and his led horses, returned perplexed and disappointed to the camp.

Washington was extremely chagrined at the issue of the undertaking, fearing that the sergeant had been detected in the last scene of his perilous and difficult enterprise. It subsequently proved, that on the day preceding the night fixed on for the capture, Arnold had removed his quarters to another part of the town, to superintend the embarkation of troops, preparing (as was rumored) for an expedition to be directed by himself, and that the American legion, consisting chiefly of American deserters, had been transferred from their barracks to one of the transports. Among the troops thus transferred was John Champe ; nor was he able for a long time to effect his escape, and resume his real character of a loyal and patriotic soldier. He was rewarded when he did so, by the munificence of the commander-in-chief, and the admiration of his old comrades in arms ; having so nobly braved, in his country's cause, not merely danger, but a long course of obloquy.

We have here to note the altered fortunes of the once prosperous General Gates. His late defeat at Camden had withered the laurels snatched at Saratoga. As in the one instance he had received exaggerated praise, so in the other, he suffered undue censure. The sudden annihilation of an army from which so much had been expected, and the retreat of the general before the field was

absolutely lost, appeared to demand a strict investigation. Congress therefore passed a resolution (October 5th), requiring Washington to order a court of inquiry into the conduct of Gates as commander of the Southern army, and to appoint some other officer to the command until the inquiry should be made. Washington at once selected Greene for the important trust, the well-tried officer whom he would originally have chosen, had his opinion been consulted, when Congress so unadvisedly gave the command to Gates. In the present instance his choice was in concurrence with the expressed wishes of the delegates of the three Southern States, conveyed to him by one of their number.

Washington's letter of instructions to Greene (October 22d) showed the implicit confidence he reposed in the abilities and integrity of that excellent officer. "Uninformed as I am," writes he, "of the enemy's force in that quarter, of our own, or of the resources which it will be in our power to command, for carrying on the war, I can give you no particular instructions, but must leave you to govern yourself entirely according to your own prudence and judgment, and the circumstances in which you find yourself. I am aware that the nature of the command will offer you embarrassments of a singular and complicated nature, but I rely upon your abilities and exertions for everything your means will enable you to effect."

With regard to the court of inquiry, it was to be con-

ducted in the quarter in which Gates had acted, where all the witnesses were, and where alone the requisite information could be obtained. Baron Steuben, who was to accompany Greene to the South, was to preside, and the members of the court were to be such general and field-officers of the continental troops as were not present at the battle of Camden, or, having been present, were not wanted as witnesses, or were persons to whom General Gates had no objection. The affair was to be conducted with the greatest impartiality, and with as much despatch as circumstances would permit.

Washington concludes his letter of instructions to Greene, with expressions dictated by friendship as well as official duty. "You will keep me constantly advised of the state of your affairs, and of every material occurrence. My warmest wishes for your success, reputation, health, and happiness accompany you."

Ravaging incursions from Canada had harassed the northern parts of the State of New York of late, and laid desolate some parts of the country from which Washington had hoped to receive great supplies of flour for the armies. Major Carleton, a nephew of Sir Guy, at the head of a motley force, European, tory, and Indian, had captured Forts Anne and George. Sir John Johnson also, with Joseph Brant, and a mongrel half-savage crew, had laid waste the fertile region of the Mohawk River, and burned the villages of Schoharie and Caughnawaga. The greatest alarm prevailed throughout the neighbor-

ing country. Governor Clinton himself took the field at the head of the militia, but before he arrived at the scene of mischief, the marauders had been encountered and driven back by General Van Rensselaer and the militia of those parts; not, however, until they had nearly destroyed the settlements on the Mohawk. Washington now put Brigadier-general James Clinton (the governor's brother) in command of the Northern department.

The state of the army was growing more and more a subject of solicitude to the commander-in-chief. He felt weary of struggling on, with such scanty means, and such vast responsibility. The campaign, which, at its commencement, had seemed pregnant with favorable events, had proved sterile and inactive, and was drawing to a close. The short terms for which most of the troops were enlisted must soon expire, and then the present army would be reduced to a mere shadow. The saddened state of his mind may be judged from his letters. An ample one addressed to General Sullivan, fully lays open his feelings and his difficulties. "I had hoped," writes he, "but hoped in vain, that a prospect was displaying which would enable me to fix a period to my military pursuits, and restore me to domestic life. The favorable disposition of Spain; the promised succor from France; the combined force in the West Indies; the declaration of Russia (acceded to by other governments of Europe, and humiliating to the naval pride and power of Great Britain); the superiority of France and Spain

by sea in Europe; the Irish claims and English disturbances, formed, in the aggregate, an opinion in my breast, which is not very susceptible of peaceful dreams, that the hour of deliverance was not far distant; since, however unwilling Great Britain might be to yield the point, it would not be in her power to continue the contest. But, alas! these prospects, flattering as they were, have proved delusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress.

"We have been half of our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines, nor money to form them; and in a little time we shall have no men, if we have no money to pay them. In a word, the history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of system and economy. It is in vain, however, to look back, nor is it our business to do so. Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people, and there is wisdom among our rulers. But to suppose that this great Revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army, that this army will be subsisted by State supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is in my opinion absurd, and as unreasonable as to expect an inversion in the order of nature to accommodate itself to our views. If it was necessary, it could be proved to any person of a moderate understanding, that an annual army, raised on the spur of the occasion, besides being unqualified for the end designed, is, in various ways which could be enumerated,

ten times more expensive than a permanent body of men under good organization and military discipline, which never was nor ever will be the case with new troops. A thousand arguments resulting from experience and the nature of things, might also be adduced to prove that the army, if it is dependent upon State supplies, must disband or starve, and that taxation alone, especially at this late hour, cannot furnish the means to carry on the war." *

We will here add, that the repeated and elaborate reasonings of Washington, backed by dear-bought experience, slowly brought Congress to adopt a system suggested by him for the organization and support of the army, according to which, troops were to be enlisted to serve throughout the war, and all officers who continued in service until the return of peace were to receive half pay during life.

* *Writings of Washington*, vii. 228.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MARQUIS LAFAYETTE AND HIS LIGHT INFANTRY.—PROPOSES A BRILLIANT STROKE.—PREPARATIONS FOR AN ATTACK ON THE BRITISH POSTS ON NEW YORK ISLAND.—VISIT OF THE MARQUIS OF CHASTELLUX TO THE AMERICAN CAMP.—WASHINGTON AT HEAD-QUARTERS.—ATTACK ON THE BRITISH POSTS GIVEN UP.—STARK FORAGES WESTCHESTER COUNTY.—EXPLOIT OF TALLMADGE ON LONG ISLAND.

THE Marquis Lafayette at this time commanded the advance guard of Washington's army, composed of six battalions of light infantry. They were better clad than the other soldiery: in trim uniforms, leathern helmets, with crests of horse-hair. The officers were armed with spontoons, the non-commissioned officers with fusees; both with short sabres which the marquis had brought from France, and presented to them. He was proud of his troops, and had a young man's ardor for active service. The inactivity which had prevailed for some time past was intolerable to him. To satisfy his impatient longings, Washington had permitted him in the beginning of October to attempt a descent at night on Staten Island, to surprise two Hessian encampments. It had fallen through for want of boats, and other requisites, but he saw enough, he said, to convince

him that the Americans were altogether fitted for such enterprises.*

The marquis saw with repining the campaign drawing to a close, and nothing done that would rouse the people in America, and be spoken of at the court of Versailles. He was urgent with Washington that the campaign should be terminated by some brilliant stroke. "Any enterprise," writes he, "will please the people of this country, and show them that we do not mean to remain idle when we have men; even a defeat, provided it were not disastrous, would have its good effect."

Complaints, he hinted, had been made in France of the prevailing inactivity. "If anything could decide the ministry to yield us the succor demanded," writes he, "it would be our giving the nation a proof that we are ready."

The brilliant stroke, suggested with some detail by the marquis, was a general attack upon Fort Washington, and the other posts at the north end of the island of New York, and, under certain circumstances, which he specified, *make a push for the city.*

Washington regarded the project of his young and ardent friend with a more sober and cautious eye. "It is impossible, my dear marquis," replies he, "to desire more ardently than I do to terminate the campaign by some happy stroke; but we must consult our means rather than our wishes, and not endeavor to better our

* *Memoires de Lafayette,* tom. i. p. 337.

affairs by attempting things, which for want of success may make them worse. We are to lament that there has been a misapprehension of our circumstances in Europe; but to endeavor to recover our reputation, we should take care that we do not injure it more. Ever since it became evident that the allied arms could not coöperate this campaign I have had an eye to the point you mention, determined, if a favorable opening should offer, to embrace it: but, so far as my information goes, the enterprise would not be warranted. It would, in my opinion, be imprudent to throw an army of ten thousand men upon an island, against nine thousand, exclusive of seamen and militia. This, from the accounts we have, appears to be the enemy's force. All we can do at present, therefore, is to endeavor to gain a more certain knowledge of their situation, and act accordingly."

The British posts in question were accordingly reconnoitered from the opposite banks of the Hudson, by Colonel Gouvion, an able French engineer. Preparations were made to carry the scheme into effect, should it be determined upon, in which case Lafayette was to lead the attack at the head of his light troops, and be supported by Washington with his main force; while a strong foraging party sent by General Heath from West Point to White Plains in Westchester County, to draw the attention of the enemy in that direction and mask the real design, was, on preconcerted signals, to advance rapidly to King's Bridge, and coöperate.

Washington's own officers were kept in ignorance of the ultimate object of the preparatory movements. "Never," writes his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, "never was a plan better arranged, and never did circumstances promise more sure or complete success. The British were not only unalarmed, but our own troops were misguided in their operations." As the plan was not carried into effect, we have forborne to give many of its details.

At this juncture, the Marquis de Chastellux arrived in camp. He was on a tour of curiosity, while the French troops at Rhode Island were in winter-quarters, and came on the invitation of his relative, the Marquis Lafayette, who was to present him to Washington. In after years he published an account of his tour, in which we have graphic sketches of the camp and the commanders. He arrived with his aides-de-camp on the afternoon of November 23d, and sought the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief. They were in a large farm-house. There was a spacious tent in the yard before it for the general, and several smaller tents in an adjacent field for his guards. Baggage wagons were arranged about for the transportation of the general's effects, and a number of grooms were attending to very fine horses belonging to general officers and their aides-de-camp. Everything was in perfect order. As De Chastellux rode up, he observed Lafayette in front of the house, conversing with an officer, tall of stature, with a mild and noble coun-

tenance. It was Washington. De Chastellux alighted and was presented by Lafayette. His reception was frank and cordial. Washington conducted him into the house. Dinner was over, but Generals Knox, Wayne, and Howe, and Colonels Hamilton, Tilghman, and other officers, were still seated round the board. Washington introduced De Chastellux to them, and ordered a repast for the former and his aides-de-camp: all remained at table, and a few glasses of claret and Madeira promoted sociability. The marquis soon found himself at his ease with Washington. "The goodness and benevolence which characterize him," observes he, "are felt by all around him; but the confidence he inspires is never familiar; it springs from a profound esteem for his virtues, and a great opinion of his talents."

In the evening, after the guests had retired, Washington conducted the marquis to a chamber prepared for him and his aides-de-camp, apologizing with nobly frank and simple politeness, that his scanty quarters did not afford more spacious accommodation.

The next morning, horses were led up after breakfast; they were to review the troops and visit Lafayette's encampment, seven miles distant. The horses which De Chastellux and Washington rode, had been presented to the latter by the State of Virginia. There were fine blood horses also for the aides-de-camp. "Washington's horses," writes De Chastellux, "are as good as they are beautiful, and all perfectly trained. He trains them all

himself. He is a very good and a very hardy cavalier, leaping the highest barriers, and riding very fast, without rising in the stirrups, bearing on the bridle, or suffering his horse to run as if wild."

In the camp of artillery where General Knox received them, the marquis found everything in perfect order, and conducted in the European style. Washington apologized for no salute being fired. Detachments were in movement at a distance, in the plan of operations, and the booming of guns might give an alarm, or be mistaken for signals.

Incessant and increasing rain obliged Washington to make but a short visit to Lafayette's camp, whence, putting spurs to his horse, he conducted his French visitors back to head-quarters on as fast a gallop as bad roads would permit.

There were twenty guests at table that day at head-quarters. The dinner was in the English style, large dishes of butcher's meat and poultry, with different kinds of vegetables, followed by pies and puddings, and a dessert of hickory nuts. Washington's fondness for the latter was noticed by the marquis, and indeed was often a subject of remark. He would sit picking them by the hour after dinner, as he sipped his wine and conversed.

One of the general's aides-de-camp sat by him at the end of the table, according to custom, to carve the dishes, and circulate the wine. Healths were drunk and toasts were given; the latter were sometimes given by the gen-

eral through his aide-de-camp. The conversation was tranquil and pleasant. Washington willingly entered into some details about the principal operations of the war, "but always," says the marquis, "with a modesty and conciseness, which proved sufficiently that it was out of pure complaisance that he consented to talk about himself."

Wayne was pronounced agreeable and animated in conversation, and possessed of wit; but Knox, with his genial aspect and cordial manners, seems to have won De Chastellux's heart. "He is thirty-five years of age," writes he, "very stout but very active; a man of talent and intelligence; amiable, gay, sincere, and loyal. It is impossible to know him without esteeming him, and to see him without loving him."

It was about half-past seven when the company rose from the table, shortly after which those who were not of the household departed. There was a light supper of three or four dishes, with fruit, and abundance of hickory nuts; the cloth was soon removed; Bordeaux and Madeira wine were placed upon the table, and conversation went on. Colonel Hamilton was the aide-de-camp who officiated, and announced the toasts as they occurred. "It is customary," writes the marquis, "towards the end of the supper to call upon each one for a *sentiment*, that is to say, the name of some lady to whom he is attached by some sentiment either of love, friendship, or simple preference."

It is evident there was extra gayety at the table

of the commander-in-chief during this visit, in compliment to his French guests; but we are told, that gay conversation often prevailed at the dinners at head-quarters among the aides-de-camp and young officers, in which Washington took little part, though a quiet smile would show that he enjoyed it.

We have been tempted to quote freely the remarks of De Chastellux, as they are those of a cultivated man of society, whose position and experience made him a competent judge, and who had an opportunity of observing Washington in a familiar point of view.

Speaking of his personal appearance, he writes: "His form is noble and elevated, well-shaped and exactly proportioned; his physiognomy mild and agreeable, but such, that one does not speak in particular of any one of his traits; and that in quitting him there remains simply the recollection of a fine countenance. His air is neither grave nor familiar; one sees sometimes on his forehead the marks of thought, but never of inquietude; while inspiring respect he inspires confidence, and his smile is always that of benevolence.

"Above all it is interesting," continues the marquis, "to see him in the midst of the general officers of his army. General in a republic, he has not the imposing state of a marshal of France who gives the *order;* hero in a republic he excites a different sort of respect, which seems to originate in this sole idea, that the welfare of each individual is attached to his person."

He sums up his character in these words: "Brave without temerity; laborious without ambition; generous without prodigality; noble without pride; virtuous without severity; he seems always to stop short of that limit, where the virtues, assuming colors more vivid, but more changeable and dubious, might be taken for defects."

During the time of this visit of the marquis to headquarters, news was received of the unexpected and accidental appearance of several British armed vessels in the Hudson; the effect was to disconcert the complicated plan of a *coup de main* upon the British posts, and finally, to cause it to be abandoned.

Some parts of the scheme were attended with success. The veteran Stark, with a detachment of twenty-five hundred men, made an extensive forage in Westchester County, and Major Tallmadge with eighty men, chiefly dismounted dragoons of Sheldon's regiment, crossed in boats from the Connecticut shore to Long Island, where the Sound was twenty miles wide; traversed the island on the night of the 22d of November, surprised Fort George at Coram, captured the garrison of fifty-two men, demolished the fort, set fire to magazines of forage, and recrossed the Sound to Fairfield, without the loss of a man: an achievement which drew forth a high eulogium from Congress.

At the end of November the army went into winter-quarters; the Pennsylvania line in the neighborhood of Morristown, the Jersey line about Pompton, the New

England troops at West Point, and the other posts of the Highlands ; and the New York line was stationed at Albany, to guard against any invasion from Canada.

The French army remained stationed at Newport, excepting the Duke of Lauzun's legion, which was cantoned at Lebanon in Connecticut. Washington's head-quarters were established at New Windsor on the Hudson.

We will now turn to the South to note the course of affairs in that quarter during the last few months.

CHAPTER XIV.

RIGOROUS MEASURES OF CORNWALLIS IN SOUTH CAROLINA.—FERGUSON SENT TO SCOUR THE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY BETWEEN THE CATAWBA AND THE YADKIN.—CORNWALLIS IN A HORNET'S NEST.—MOVEMENTS OF FERGUSON.—MOUNTAIN MEN AND FIERCE MEN FROM KENTUCKY.—BATTLE OF KING'S MOUNTAIN.—RETROGRADE MARCH OF CORNWALLIS.

CORNWALLIS having, as he supposed, entirely crushed the "rebel cause" in South Carolina, by the defeats of Gates and Sumter, remained for some time at Camden, detained by the excessive heat of the weather and the sickness of part of his troops, broken down by the hardships of campaigning under a southern sun. He awaited also supplies and reinforcements.

Immediately after the victory at Camden, he had ordered the friends to royalty in North Carolina "to arm and intercept the beaten army of General Gates," promising that he would march directly to the borders of that province in their support; he now detached Major Patrick Ferguson to its western confines, to keep the war alive in that quarter. This resolute partisan had with him his own corps of light infantry, and a body of royalist militia of his own training. His whole force was be-

tween eleven and twelve hundred men, noted for activity and alertness, and unincumbered with baggage or artillery.

His orders were to skirr the mountain country between the Catawba and the Yadkin, harass the whigs, inspirit the tories, and embody the militia under the royal banner. This done, he was to repair to Charlotte, the capital of Mecklenburg County, where he would find Lord Cornwallis, who intended to make it his rendezvous. Should he, however, in the course of his tour, be threatened by a superior force, he was immediately to return to the main army. No great opposition, however, was apprehended, the Americans being considered totally broken up and dispirited.

During the suspense of his active operations in the field, Cornwallis instituted rigorous measures against Americans who continued under arms, or, by any other acts, manifested what he termed "a desperate perseverance in opposing His Majesty's Government." Among these were included many who had taken refuge in North Carolina. A commissioner was appointed to take possession of their estates and property; of the annual product of which a part was to be allowed for the support of their families, the residue to be applied to the maintenance of the war. Letters from several of the principal inhabitants of Charleston having been found in the baggage of the captured American generals, the former were accused of breaking their parole, and holding a treasonable

correspondence with the armed enemies of England; they were in consequence confined on board of prison ships, and afterwards transported to St. Augustine in Florida.

Among the prisoners taken in the late combats, many, it was discovered, had British protections in their pockets; these were deemed arrant runagates, amenable to the penalties of the proclamation issued by Sir Henry Clinton on the 3d of June; they were therefore led forth from the provost and hanged, almost without the form of an inquiry.

These measures certainly were not in keeping with the character for moderation and benevolence usually given to Lord Cornwallis; but they accorded with the rancorous spirit manifested toward each other both by whigs and tories in Southern warfare. If they were intended by his lordship as measures of policy, their effect was far different from what he anticipated; opposition was exasperated into deadly hate, and a cry of vengeance was raised throughout the land. Cornwallis decamped from Camden, and set out for North Carolina. In the subjugation of that province, he counted on the coöperation of the troops which Sir Henry Clinton was to send to the lower part of Virginia, which, after reducing the Virginians to obedience, were to join his lordship's standard on the confines of North Carolina.

Advancing into the latter province, Cornwallis took post at Charlotte, where he had given rendezvous to Ferguson. Mecklenburg, of which this was the capital, was,

as the reader may recollect, the "heady, high-minded" county where the first declaration of independence had been made, and his lordship from uncomfortable experience soon pronounced Charlotte "the Hornet's Nest of North Carolina."

The surrounding country was wild and rugged, covered with close and thick woods, and crossed in every direction by narrow roads. All attempts at foraging were worse than useless. The plantations were small and afforded scanty supplies.

The inhabitants were stanch whigs, with the pugnacious spirit of the old Covenanters. Instead of remaining at home and receiving the king's money in exchange for their produce, they turned out with their rifles, stationed themselves in covert places, and fired upon the foraging parties; convoys of provisions from Camden had to fight their way, and expresses were shot down and their despatches seized.

The capture of his expresses was a sore annoyance to Cornwallis, depriving him of all intelligence concerning the movements of Colonel Ferguson, whose arrival he was anxiously awaiting. The expedition of that doughty partisan officer here calls for especial notice. He had been chosen for this military tour as being calculated to gain friends by his conciliating disposition and manners, and his address to the people of the country was in that spirit: "We come not to make war upon women and children, but to give them money and relieve their dis-

tresses." Ferguson, however, had a loyal hatred of whigs, and to his standard flocked many rancorous tories, besides outlaws and desperadoes, so that with all his conciliating intentions, his progress through the country was attended by many exasperating excesses.

He was on his way to join Cornwallis when a chance for a signal exploit presented itself. An American force under Colonel Elijah Clarke of Georgia, was retreating to the mountain districts of North Carolina, after an unsuccessful attack upon the British post at Augusta. Ferguson resolved to cut off their retreat. Turning towards the mountains, he made his way through a rugged wilderness and took post at Gilbert-town, a small frontier village of log-houses. He was encouraged to this step, say the British chroniclers, by the persuasion that there was no force in that part of the country able to look him in the face. He had no idea that the marauds of his followers had arrayed the very wilderness against him. "All of a sudden," say the chroniclers just cited, "a numerous, fierce, and unexpected enemy sprung up in the depths of the desert. The scattered inhabitants of the mountains assembled without noise or warning, under the conduct of six or seven of their militia colonels, to the number of six hundred strong, daring, well-mounted, and excellent horsemen." *

These, in fact, were the people of the mountains which

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 52.

form the frontiers of the Carolinas and Georgia, "mountain men," as they were commonly called, a hardy race, half huntsmen, half herdsmen, inhabiting deep narrow valleys, and fertile slopes, adapted to grazing, watered by the coldest of springs and brightest of streams, and embosomed in mighty forest trees. Being subject to inroads and surprisals from the Chickasaws, Cherokees, and Creeks, a tacit league existed among them for mutual defense, and it only needed, as in the present instance, an alarm to be circulated through their settlements by swift messengers, to bring them at once to the point of danger. Beside these, there were other elements of war suddenly gathering in Ferguson's vicinity. A band of what were termed "the wild and fierce" inhabitants of Kentucky, with men from other settlements west of the Alleghanies, had crossed the mountains, led by Colonels Campbell and Boone, to pounce upon a quantity of Indian goods at Augusta; but had pulled up on hearing of the repulse of Clarke. The stout yeomen, also, of the district of Ninety-Six, roused by the marauds of Ferguson, had taken the field, under the conduct of Colonel James Williams, of Granville County. Here, too, were hard riders and sharpshooters, from Holston River, Powel's Valley, Botetourt, Fincastle, and other parts of Virginia, commanded by Colonels Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby, and Sevier. Such were the different bodies of mountaineers and backwoodsmen, suddenly drawing together from various parts to the number of three thousand.

Threatened by a force so superior in numbers and fierce in hostility, Ferguson issued an address to rouse the tories. "The Backwater men have crossed the mountain," said he, "McDowell, Hampton, Shelby, and Cleveland are at their head. If you choose to be trodden upon forever and ever by a set of mongrels, say so at once, and let women look out for real men to protect them. If you desire to live and bear the name of men, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp."

The taunting appeal produced but little effect. In this exigency, Ferguson remembered the instructions of Cornwallis, that he should rejoin him should he find himself threatened by a superior force; breaking up his quarters, therefore, he pushed for the British army, sending messengers ahead to apprise his lordship of his danger. Unfortunately for him, his missives were intercepted.

Gilbert-town had not long been vacated by Ferguson and his troops, when the motley host we have described thronged in. Some were on foot, but the greater part on horseback. Some were in homespun garb; but the most part in hunting-shirts, occasionally decorated with colored fringe and tassels. Each man had his long rifle and hunting-knife, his wallet, or knapsack and blanket, and either a buck's tail or sprig of evergreen in his hat. Here and there an officer appeared in the Continental uniform of blue and buff, but most preferred the half-Indian hunting-dress. There was neither tent nor tent equipage, neither baggage nor baggage wagon to encum-

ber the movements of that extemporaneous host. Prompt warriors of the wilderness, with them it was "seize the weapon—spring into the saddle—and away!" In going into action, it was their practice to dismount, tie their horses to the branches of trees, or secure them in some other way, so as to be at hand for use when the battle was over, either to pursue a flying enemy, or make their own escape by dint of hoof.

There was a clamor of tongues for a time at Gilbertown; groups on horseback and foot in every part, holding hasty council. Being told that Ferguson had retreated by the Cherokee road toward North Carolina, about nine hundred of the hardiest and best mounted set out in urgent pursuit; leaving those who were on foot, or weakly mounted, to follow on as fast as possible. Colonel William Campbell, of Virginia, having come from the greatest distance, was allowed to have command of the whole party; but there was not much order nor subordination. Each colonel led his own men in his own way.

In the evening they arrived at the Cowpens, a grazing neighborhood. Here two beeves were killed and given to be cut up, cooked and eaten as quick as possible. Before those who were slow or negligent had half prepared their repast, marching orders were given, and all were again in the saddle. A rapid and irregular march was kept up all night in murky darkness and through a heavy rain. About daybreak they crossed Broad River, where an attack was apprehended. Not finding the

enemy, they halted, lit their fires, made their morning's meal and took a brief repose. By nine o'clock they were again on the march. The rainy night had been succeeded by a bright October morning, and all were in high spirits. Ferguson, they learnt, had taken the road toward King's Mountain, about twelve miles distant. When within three miles of it their scouts brought in word that he had taken post on its summit. The officers now held a short consultation on horseback, and then proceeded. The position taken by Ferguson was a strong one. King's Mountain rises out of a broken country, and is detached, on the north, from inferior heights by a deep valley, so as to resemble an insulated promontory about half a mile in length, with sloping sides, excepting on the north. The mountain was covered for the most part with lofty forest trees, free from underwood, interspersed with boulders and masses of gray rock. The forest was sufficiently open to give free passage to horsemen.

As the Americans drew nearer, they could occasionally, through openings of the woodland, descry the glittering of arms along a level ridge, forming the crest of King's Mountain. This, Ferguson had made his stronghold; boasting that "if all the rebels out of hell should attack him, they would not drive him from it."

Dismounting at a small stream which runs through a ravine, the Americans picketed their horses or tied them to the branches of the trees, and gave them in charge of

a small guard. They then formed themselves into three divisions of nearly equal size, and prepared to storm the heights on three sides. Campbell, seconded by Shelby, was to lead the centre division; Sevier with McDowell the right, and Cleveland and Williams the left. The divisions were to scale the mountain as nearly as possible at the same time. The fighting directions were in frontier style. When once in action, every one must act for himself. The men were not to wait for the word of command, but to take good aim and fire as fast as possible. When they could no longer hold their ground, they were to get behind trees, or retreat a little, and return to the fight, but never to go quite off.

Campbell allowed time for the flanking divisions to move to the right and left along the base of the mountain, and take their proper distances; he then pushed up in front with the centre division, he and Shelby, each at the head of his men. The first firing was about four o'clock, when a picket was driven in by Cleveland and Williams on the left, and pursued up the mountain. Campbell soon arrived within rifle distance of the crest of the mountain, whence a sheeted fire of musketry was opened upon him. He instantly deployed his men, posted them behind trees, and returned the fire with deadly effect.

Ferguson, exasperated at being hunted into this mountain fastness, had been chafing in his rocky lair and meditating a furious sally. He now rushed out with his

regulars, made an impetuous charge with the bayonet, and dislodging his assailants from their coverts, began to drive them down the mountain, they not having a bayonet among them. He had not proceeded far when a flanking fire was opened by one of the other divisions; facing about and attacking this he was again successful, when a third fire was opened from another quarter. Thus, as fast as one division gave way before the bayonet, another came to its relief; while those who had given way rallied and returned to the charge. The nature of the fighting ground was more favorable to the rifle than the bayonet, and this was a kind of warfare in which the frontier men were at home. The elevated position of the enemy also was in favor of the Americans, securing them from the danger of their own cross-fire. Ferguson found that he was completely in the hunter's toils, beset on every side; but he stood bravely at bay, until the ground around him was strewed with the killed and wounded, picked off by the fatal rifle. His men were at length broken, and retreated in confusion along the ridge. He galloped from place to place endeavoring to rally them, when a rifle ball brought him to the ground, and his white horse was seen careering down the mountain without a rider.

This closed the bloody fight; for Ferguson's second in command, seeing all further resistance hopeless, hoisted a white flag, beat a parley, and sued for quarters. One hundred and fifty of the enemy had fallen, and as many

been wounded; while of the Americans, but twenty were killed, though a considerable number were wounded. Among those slain was Colonel James Williams, who had commanded the troops of Ninety-Six, and proved himself one of the most daring of the partisan leaders.

Eight hundred and ten men were taken prisoners, one hundred of whom were regulars, the rest royalists. The rancor awakened by civil war was shown in the treatment of some of the prisoners. A court-martial was held the day after the battle, and a number of tory prisoners who had been bitter in their hostility to the American cause, and flagitious in their persecution of their countrymen, were hanged. This was to revenge the death of American prisoners hanged at Camden and elsewhere.

The army of mountaineers and frontier men, thus fortuitously congregated, did not attempt to follow up their signal blow. They had no general scheme, no plan of campaign; it was the spontaneous rising of the sons of the soil, to revenge it on its invaders, and, having effected their purpose, they returned in triumph to their homes. They were little aware of the importance of their achievement. The battle of King's Mountain, inconsiderable as it was in the numbers engaged, turned the tide of Southern warfare. The destruction of Ferguson and his corps gave a complete check to the expedition of Cornwallis. He began to fear for the safety of South Carolina, liable to such sudden irruptions from the mountains; lest, while

he was facing to the north, these hordes of stark-riding warriors might throw themselves behind him, and produce a popular combustion in the province he had left. He resolved, therefore, to return with all speed to that province and provide for its security.

On the 14th of October he commenced his retrograde and mortifying march, conducting it in the night, and with such hurry and confusion, that nearly twenty wagons, laden with baggage and supplies, were lost. As he proceeded, the rainy season set in; the brooks and rivers became swollen, and almost impassable; the roads deep and miry; provisions and forage scanty; the troops generally sickly, having no tents. Lord Cornwallis himself was seized with a bilious fever, which obliged him to halt two days in the Catawba settlement, and afterwards to be conveyed in a wagon, giving up the command to Lord Rawdon.

In the course of this desolate march, the British suffered as usual from the vengeance of an outraged country, being fired upon from behind trees and other coverts by the yeomanry; their sentries shot down at their encampments; their foraging parties cut off. "The enemy," writes Lord Rawdon, "are mostly mounted militia, not to be overtaken by our infantry, nor to be safely pursued in this strong country by our cavalry."

For two weeks were they toiling on this retrograde march through deep roads, and a country cut up by water-courses, with the very elements arrayed against

them. At length, after fording the Catawba where it was six hundred yards wide, and three and a half deep, and where a handful of riflemen might have held them in check, the army arrived at Winnsborough, in South Carolina. Hence, by order of Cornwallis, Lord Rawdon wrote on the 24th of October to Brigadier-general Leslie, who was at that time in the Chesapeake, with the force detached by Sir Henry Clinton for a descent upon Virginia, suggesting the expediency of his advancing to North Carolina, for the purpose of coöperation with Cornwallis, who feared to proceed far from South Carolina, lest it should be again in insurrection.

In the meantime his lordship took post at Winnsborough. It was a central position, where he might cover the country from partisan incursions, obtain forage and supplies, and await the coöperation of General Leslie.

CHAPTER XV.

MARION.—HIS CHARACTER.—BYE NAMES.—HAUNTS.—TARLETON IN QUEST OF HIM.—SUMTER ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE SANTEE.—HIS AFFAIR WITH TARLETON AT BLACK STOCK HILL.—GATES AT HILLSBOROUGH.—HIS DOMESTIC MISFORTUNES.—ARRIVAL OF GREENE.—HIS CONSIDERATE CONDUCT.—GATES RETIRES TO HIS ESTATE.—CONDITION OF THE ARMY.—STRATAGEM OF COLONEL WASHINGTON AT CLERMONT.—MORGAN DETACHED TO THE DISTRICT OF NINETY-SIX.—GREENE POSTS HIMSELF ON THE PEDEE.

THE victory at King's Mountain had set the partisan spirit throughout the country in a blaze. Francis Marion was soon in the field. He had been made a brigadier-general by Governor Rutledge, but his brigade, as it was called, was formed of neighbors and friends, and was continually fluctuating in numbers. He was nearly fifty years of age, and small of stature, but hardy, healthy, and vigorous. Brave but not braggart, never avoiding danger, but never rashly seeking it. Taciturn and abstemious; a strict disciplinarian; careful of the lives of his men, but little mindful of his own life. Just in his dealings, free from everything selfish or mercenary, and incapable of a meanness. He had his haunts and strongholds in the morasses of the Pedee and Black Rivers. His men were hardy and abstemious as himself;

they ate their meat without salt, often subsisted on potatoes, were scantily clad, and almost destitute of blankets. Marion was full of stratagems and expedients. Sallying forth from his morasses, he would overrun the lower districts, pass the Santee, beat up the small posts in the vicinity of Charleston, cut up the communication between that city and Camden; and having struck some signal blow, so as to rouse the vengeance of the enemy, would retreat again into his fenny fastnesses. Hence the British gave him the bye name of the *Swamp Fox*, but those of his countrymen who knew his courage, his loftiness of spirit and spotless integrity, considered him the *Bayard of the South.*

Tarleton, who was on duty in that part of the country, undertook, as he said, to draw the swamp fox from his cover. He accordingly marched cautiously down the east bank of the Wateree with a body of dragoons and infantry, in compact order. The fox, however, kept close; he saw that the enemy was too strong for him. Tarleton now changed his plan. By day he broke up his force into small detachments or patrols, giving them orders to keep near enough to each other to render mutual support if attacked, and to gather together at night.

The artifice had its effect. Marion sallied forth from his covert just before daybreak to make an attack upon one of these detachments, when, to his surprise, he found himself close upon the British camp. Perceiving the snare that had been spread for him, he made a rapid retreat. A

close pursuit took place. For seven hours Marion was hunted from one swamp and fastness to another; several stragglers of his band were captured, and Tarleton was in strong hope of bringing him into action, when an express came spurring from Cornwallis, calling for the immediate services of himself and his dragoons in another quarter.

Sumter was again in the field! That indefatigable partisan having recruited a strong party in the mountainous country, to which he retreated after his defeat on the Wateree, had reappeared on the west side of the Santee, repulsed a British party sent against him, killing its leader; then, crossing Broad River, had effected a junction with Colonels Clark and Brannan, and now menaced the British posts in the district of Ninety-Six.

It was to disperse this head of partisan war that Tarleton was called off from beleaguering Marion. Advancing with his accustomed celerity, he thought to surprise Sumter on the Enoree River. A deserter apprised the latter of his danger. He pushed across the river, but was hotly pursued, and his rear-guard roughly handled. He now made for the Tyger River, noted for turbulence and rapidity; once beyond this, he might disband his followers in the woods. Tarleton, to prevent his passing it unmolested, spurred forward in advance of his main body with one hundred and seventy dragoons and eighty mounted men of the infantry. Before five o'clock (November 20) his advance guard overtook and charged the rear of the Americans, who retreated to the main body. Sumter

finding it impossible to cross Tyger River in safety, and being informed that the enemy, thus pressing upon him, were without infantry or cannon, took post on Black Stock Hill, with a rivulet and rail fence in front, the Tyger River in the rear and on the right flank, and a large log barn on the left. The barn was turned into a fortress, and a part of the force stationed in it to fire through the apertures between the logs.

Tarleton halted on an opposite height to await the arrival of his infantry, and part of his men dismounted to ease their horses. Sumter seized this moment for an attack. He was driven back after some sharp fighting. The enemy pursued, but were severely galled by the fire from the log barn. Enraged at seeing his men shot down, Tarleton charged with his cavalry, but found it impossible to dislodge the Americans from their rustic fortress. At the approach of night he fell back to join his infantry, leaving the ground strewed with his killed and wounded. The latter were treated with great humanity by Sumter. The loss of the Americans was only three killed and four wounded.

Sumter, who had received a severe wound in the breast, remained several hours on the field of action; but, understanding the enemy would be powerfully reinforced in the morning, he crossed the Tyger River in the night. He was then placed on a litter between two horses, and thus conducted across the country by a few faithful adherents. The rest of his little army dispersed

themselves through the woods. Tarleton, finding his enemy had disappeared, claimed the credit of a victory; but those who considered the affair rightly, declared that he had received a severe check.

While the attention of the enemy was thus engaged by the enterprises of Sumter and Marion and their swamp warriors, General Gates was gathering together the scattered fragments of his army at Hillsborough. When all were collected, his whole force, exclusive of militia, did not exceed fourteen hundred men. It was, as he said, "rather a shadow than a substance." His troops, disheartened by defeat, were in a forlorn state, without clothing, without pay, and sometimes without provisions. Destitute of tents, they constructed hovels of fence-rails, poles, brush-wood, and the stalks of Indian corn, the officers faring no better than the men.

The vanity of Gates was completely cut down by his late reverses. He had lost, too, the confidence of his officers, and was unable to maintain discipline among his men; who, through their irregularities, became a terror to the country people.

On the retreat of Cornwallis from Charlotte, Gates advanced to that place to make it his winter-quarters. Huts were ordered to be built, and a regular encampment was commenced. Smallwood, with a body of militia, was stationed below on the Catawba to guard the road leading through Camden; and further down was posted Brigadier-general Morgan, with a corps of light troops.

To add to his depression of spirits, Gates received the melancholy intelligence of the death of an only son, and, while he was yet writhing under the blow, came official despatches informing him of his being superseded in command. A letter from Washington, we are told, accompanied them, sympathizing with him in his domestic misfortunes, adverting with peculiar delicacy to his reverses in battle, assuring him of his undiminished confidence in his zeal and capacity, and his readiness to give him the command of the left wing of his army as soon as he could make it convenient to join him.

The effect of this letter was overpowering. Gates was found walking about his room in the greatest agitation, pressing the letter to his lips, breaking forth into ejaculations of gratitude and admiration, and when he could find utterance to his thoughts, declared that its tender sympathy and considerate delicacy had conveyed more consolation and delight to his heart than he had believed it possible ever to have felt again.*

General Greene arrived at Charlotte, on the 2d of December. On his way from the North he had made arrangements for supplies from the different States; and had left the Baron Steuben in Virginia to defend that State and procure and send on reinforcements and stores for the southern army. On the day following his arrival,

* Related by Dr. Wm. Reed, at that time superintendent of the hospital department at Hillsborough, to Alex. Garden, aide-de-camp to Greene.—Garden's *Anecdotes*, p. 350.

Greene took formal command. The delicacy with which he conducted himself towards his unfortunate predecessor is said to have been "edifying to the army." Consulting with his officers as to the court of inquiry on the conduct of General Gates, ordered by Congress, it was determined that there was not a sufficient number of general officers in camp to sit upon it; that the state of General Gates' feelings, in consequence of the death of his son, disqualified him from entering upon the task of his defense; and that it would be indelicate in the extreme to press on him an investigation, which his honor would not permit him to defer. Besides, added Greene, his is a case of misfortune, and the most honorable course to be pursued, both with regard to General Gates and the government, is to make such representations as may obtain a revision of the order of Congress directing an inquiry into his conduct. In this opinion all present concurred.

Gates, in fact, when informed in the most delicate manner of the order of Congress, was urgent that a court of inquiry should be immediately convened; he acknowledged there was some important evidence that could not at present be procured; but he relied on the honor and justice of the court to make allowance for the deficiency. He was ultimately brought to acquiesce in the decision of the council of war for the postponement, but declared that he could not think of serving until the matter should have been properly investigated. He determined to pass

the interim on his estate in Virginia. Greene, in a letter to Washington (December 7th), writes : "General Gates sets out to-morrow for the northward. Many officers think very favorably of his conduct, and that, whenever an inquiry takes place, he will honorably acquit himself."

The kind and considerate conduct of Greene on the present occasion, completely subdued the heart of Gates The coldness, if not ill-will, with which he had hitherto regarded him, was at an end, and, in all his subsequent correspondence with him, he addressed him in terms of affection.

We take pleasure in noting the generous conduct of the General Assembly of Virginia towards Gates. It was in session when he arrived at Richmond. "Those fathers of the commonwealth," writes Colonel H. Lee, in his memoirs, "appointed a committee of their body to wait on the vanquished general, and assure him of their high regard and esteem, that their remembrance of his former glorious services was never to be obliterated by any reverse of fortune ; but, ever mindful of his great merit, they would omit no opportunity of testifying to the world the gratitude which Virginia, as a member of the American Union, owed to him in his military character."

Gates was sensibly affected and comforted by this kind reception, and retired with a lightened heart to his farm in Berkeley County.

The whole force at Charlotte, when Greene took command, did not much exceed twenty-three hundred men,

and more than half of them were militia. It had been broken in spirit by the recent defeat. The officers had fallen into habits of negligence; the soldiers were loose and disorderly, without tents and camp equipage; badly clothed and fed, and prone to relieve their necessities by depredating upon the inhabitants. Greene's letters written at the time, abound with military aphorisms suggested by the squalid scene around him. "There must be either pride or principle," said he, "to make a soldier. No man will think himself bound to fight the battles of a State that leaves him perishing for want of covering; nor can you inspire a soldier with the sentiment of pride, while his situation renders him an object of pity, rather than of envy. Good feeling is the first principle of good service. It is impossible to preserve discipline where troops are in want of everything—to attempt severity will only thin the ranks by a more hasty desertion."

The state of the country in which he was to act was equally discouraging. "It is so extensive," said he, "and the powers of government so weak, that everybody does as he pleases. The inhabitants are much divided in their political sentiments, and the whigs and tories pursue each other with little less than savage fury. The back country people are bold and daring; but the people upon the sea-shore are sickly, and but indifferent militia."

"War here," observes he in another letter, "is upon a very different scale to what it is at the northward. It is

a plain business there. The geography of the country reduces its operations to two or three points. But here it is everywhere ; and the country is so full of deep rivers and impassable creeks and swamps, that you are always liable to misfortunes of a capital nature.

"The whigs and tories," adds he, "are continually out in small parties, and all the middle country is so disaffected, that you cannot lay in the most trifling magazine, or send a wagon through the country with the least article of stores without a guard."

A recent exploit had given some animation to the troops. Lieutenant-colonel Washington, detached with a troop of light horse to check a foraging party of the enemy, scoured the country within thirteen miles of Camden. Here he found a body of loyalist militia strongly posted at Clermont, the seat of Colonel Rugeley, their tory commander. They had ensconced themselves in a large barn, built of logs, and had fortified it by a slight intrenchment and a line of abatis. To attack it with cavalry was useless. Colonel Washington dismounted part of his troops to appear like infantry ; placed on two wagon-wheels the trunk of a pine-tree, shaped and painted to look like a field-piece, brought it to bear upon the enemy, and, displaying his cavalry, sent in a flag summoning the garrison to surrender instantly, on pain of having their log castle battered about their ears. The garrison, to the number of one hundred and twelve men, with Colonel Rugeley at their head, gave themselves up

prisoners of war.* Cornwallis, mentioning the ludicrous affair in a letter to Tarleton, adds sarcastically: "Rugeley will not be made a brigadier." The unlucky colonel never again appeared in arms.

The first care of General Greene was to reorganize his army. He went to work quietly but resolutely: called no councils of war; communicated his plans and intentions to few, and such only as were able and willing to aid in executing them. "If I cannot inspire respect and confidence by an independent conduct," said he, "it will be impossible to instill discipline and order among the troops." His efforts were successful; the army soon began to assume what he termed a military complexion.

He was equally studious to promote harmony among his officers, of whom a number were young, gallant, and intelligent. It was his delight to have them at his genial but simple table, where parade and restraint were banished, and pleasant and instructive conversation was promoted; which, next to reading, was his great enjoyment. The manly benignity of his manners diffused itself round his board, and a common sentiment of affection for their chief united the young men in a kind of brotherhood.

Finding the country round Charlotte exhausted by repeated foragings, he separated the army into two divisions. One, about one thousand strong, was com-

* Williams' Narrative.

manded by Brigadier-general Morgan, of rifle renown, and was composed of four hundred continental infantry, under Lieutenant-colonel Howard of the Maryland line, two companies of Virginia militia under Captains Tripplet and Tate, and one hundred dragoons, under Lieutenant-colonel Washington. With these Morgan was detached towards the district of Ninety-Six, in South Carolina, with orders to take a position near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad Rivers, and assemble the militia of the country. With the other division, Greene made a march of toilful difficulty through a barren country, with wagons and horses quite unfit for service, to Hicks' Creek, in Chesterfield district, on the east side of the Pedee River, opposite the Cheraw Hills. There he posted himself, on the 26th, partly to discourage the enemy from attempting to possess themselves of Cross Creek, which would give them command of the greatest part of the provisions of the lower country—partly to form a camp of repose; "and no army," writes he, "ever wanted one more, the troops having totally lost their discipline."

"I will not pain your Excellency," writes he to Washington, "with further accounts of the wants and sufferings of this army; but I am not without great apprehension of its entire dissolution, unless the commissary's and quartermaster's departments can be rendered more competent to the demands of the service. Nor are the clothing and hospital departments upon a better footing. Not a shil-

ling in the pay chest, nor a prospect of any for months to come. This is really making bricks without straw."

Governor Rutledge also wrote to Washington from Greene's camp, on the 28th of December, imploring aid for South Carolina. "Some of the stanch inhabitants of Charleston," writes he, "have been sent to St. Augustine, and others are to follow. The enemy have hanged many people, who, from fear, or the impracticability of removing, had received protections or given paroles, and from attachment to, had afterwards taken part with us. They have burnt a great number of houses, and turned many women, formerly of good fortune, with their children (whom their husbands or parents, from an unwillingness to join the enemy, had left) almost naked into the woods. Their cruelty and the distresses of the people are indeed beyond description. I entreat your Excellency, therefore, seriously to consider the unhappy state of South Carolina and Georgia; and I rely on your humanity and your knowledge of their importance to the Union, for such speedy and effectual support, as may compel the enemy to evacuate every part of these countries." *

* *Correspondence of the Revolution*, iii. 188.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOSTILE EMBARKATIONS TO THE SOUTH.—ARNOLD IN COMMAND.—NECESSITOUS STATE OF THE COUNTRY.—WASHINGTON URGES A FOREIGN LOAN.—MISSION OF COLONEL LAURENS TO FRANCE TO SEEK AID IN MEN AND MONEY.—GRIEVANCES OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE.—MUTINY.—NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MUTINEERS.—ARTICLES OF ACCOMMODATION.—POLICY DOUBTED BY WASHINGTON.—RIGOROUS COURSE ADOPTED BY HIM WITH OTHER MALCONTENTS.—SUCCESSFUL.—RATIFICATION OF THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION OF THE STATES.

THE occurrences recorded in the last few chapters made Washington apprehend a design on the part of the enemy to carry the stress of war into the Southern States. Conscious that he was the man to whom all looked in time of emergency, and who was, in a manner, responsible for the general course of military affairs, he deeply felt the actual impotency of his position.

In a letter to Franklin, who was minister-plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles, he strongly expresses his chagrin. "Disappointed of the second division of French troops, but more especially in the expected naval superiority, which was the pivot upon which everything turned, we have been compelled to spend an inactive campaign,

after a flattering prospect at the opening of it, and vigorous struggles to make it a decisive one on our part. Latterly, we have been obliged to become spectators of a succession of detachments from the army at New York in aid of Lord Cornwallis, while our naval weakness, and the political dissolution of a great part of our army, put it out of our power to counteract them at the southward or to take advantage of them here."

The last of these detachments to the South took place on the 20th of December, but was not destined, as Washington had supposed, for Carolina. Sir Henry Clinton had received information that the troops already mentioned as being under General Leslie in the Chesapeake, had, by orders from Cornwallis, sailed for Charleston, to reinforce his lordship; and this detachment was to take their place in Virginia. It was composed of British, German, and refugee troops, about seventeen hundred strong, and was commanded by Benedict Arnold, now a brigadier-general in His Majesty's service. Sir Henry Clinton, who distrusted the fidelity of the man he had corrupted, sent with him Colonels Dundas and Simcoe, experienced officers, by whose advice he was to be guided in every important measure. He was to make an incursion into Virginia, destroy the public magazines, assemble and arm the loyalists, and hold himself ready to coöperate with Lord Cornwallis. He embarked his troops in a fleet of small vessels, and departed on his enterprise animated by the rancorous spirit of a renegade, and prepared, as

he vaunted, to give the Americans a blow "that would make the whole continent shake." We shall speak of his expedition hereafter.

As Washington beheld one hostile armament after another winging its way to the South, and received applications from that quarter for assistance, which he had not the means to furnish, it became painfully apparent to him that the efforts to carry on the war had exceeded the natural capabilities of the country. Its widely diffused population and the composition and temper of some of its people, rendered it difficult to draw together its resources. Commerce was almost extinct; there was not sufficient natural wealth on which to found a revenue; paper currency had depreciated through want of funds for its redemption, until it was nearly worthless. The mode of supplying the army by assessing a proportion of the productions of the earth, had proved ineffectual, oppressive, and productive of an alarming opposition. Domestic loans yielded but trifling assistance. The patience of the army was nearly exhausted; the people were dissatisfied with the mode of supporting the war, and there was reason to apprehend, that, under the pressure of impositions of a new and odious kind, they might imagine they had only exchanged one kind of tyranny for another.

We give but a few of many considerations which Washington was continually urging upon the attention of Congress in his full and perspicuous manner; the end of which was to enforce his opinion that a foreign

loan was indispensably necessary to a continuance of the war.

His earnest counsels and entreaties were at length successful in determining Congress to seek aid both in men and money from abroad. Accordingly, on the 28th of December they commissioned Lieutenant-colonel John Laurens, special minister at the court of Versailles, to apply for such aid. The situation he had held, as aide-de-camp to the commander-in-chief, had given him an opportunity of observing the course of affairs, and acquainting himself with the wants and resources of the country; and he was instructed to confer with Washington, previous to his departure, as to the objects of his mission. Not content with impressing him verbally with his policy, Washington gave him a letter of instructions for his government, and to be used as occasion might require. In this he advised him to solicit a loan sufficiently large to be a foundation for substantial arrangements of finance, to revive public credit, and give vigor to future operations; next to a loan of money, a naval force was to be desired, sufficient to maintain a constant superiority on the American coast; also additional succor in troops. In a word, a means of coöperation by sea and land, with purse and sword, competent by a decided effort to attain, once for all, the great objects of the alliance, the liberty and independence of the United States.

He was to show, at the same time, the ample means possessed by the nation to repay the loan, from its com-

parative freedom from debt, and its vast and valuable tracts of unsettled lands, the variety and fertility of its climates and soils, and its advantages of every kind for a lucrative commerce, and rapid increase of population and prosperity.

Scarce had Colonel Laurens been appointed to this mission, when a painful occurrence proved the urgent necessity of the required aid.

In the arrangement for winter-quarters, the Pennsylvania line, consisting of six regiments, was hutted near Morristown. These troops had experienced the hardships and privations common to the whole army. General Wayne, who commanded them, had a soldier's sympathy in the sufferings of his men, and speaks of them in feeling language: "Poorly clothed, badly fed, and worse paid," writes he, "some of them not having received a paper dollar for near twelve months; exposed to winter's piercing cold, to drifting snows and chilling blasts, with no protection but old worn-out coats, tattered linen overalls, and but one blanket between three men. In this situation the enemy begin to work upon their passions, and have found means to circulate some proclamations among them. . . . . The officers in general, as well as myself, find it necessary to stand for hours every day exposed to wind and weather among the poor naked fellows, while they are working at their huts and redoubts, often assisting with our own hands, in order to produce a conviction to their minds that we share, and more than

share, every vicissitude in common with them : sometimes asking to participate their bread and water. The good effect of this conduct is very conspicuous, and prevents their murmuring in public ; but the delicate mind and eye of humanity are hurt, very much hurt, at their visible distress and private complainings."

How strongly are here depicted the trials to which the soldiers of the Revolution were continually subjected. But the Pennsylvania line had an additional grievance peculiar to themselves. Many of them had enlisted to serve "for three years, or during war," that is to say, for less than three years should the war cease in less time. When, however, having served for three years, they sought their discharge, the officers, loth to lose such experienced soldiers, interpreted the terms of enlistment to mean three years, or to the end of the war, should it continue for a longer time.

This chicanery naturally produced great exasperation. It was heightened by the conduct of a deputation from Pennsylvania, which, while it left veteran troops unpaid, distributed gold by handfuls among raw six-month levies, whose time was expiring, as bounties on their re-enlisting for the war.

The first day of the New Year arrived. The men were excited by an extra allowance of ardent spirits. In the evening, at a preconcerted signal, a great part of the Pennsylvania line, non-commissioned officers included, turned out under arms, declaring their intention to

march to Philadelphia, and demand redress from Congress. Wayne endeavored to pacify them; they were no longer to be pacified by words. He cocked his pistol; in an instant their bayonets were at his breast. "We love, we respect you," cried they, "but you are a dead man if you fire. Do not mistake us; we are not going to the enemy; were they now to come out, you would see us fight under your orders with as much resolution and alacrity as ever."*

Their threat was not an idle one. In an attempt to suppress the mutiny there was a bloody affray, in which numbers were wounded on both sides, among whom were several officers. One captain was killed.

Three regiments which had taken no part in the mutiny were paraded under their officers. The mutineers compelled them to join their ranks. Their number being increased to about thirteen hundred, they seized upon six field-pieces, and set out in the night for Philadelphia under command of their sergeants.

Fearing the enemy might take advantage of this outbreak, Wayne detached a Jersey brigade to Chatham, and ordered the militia to be called out there. Alarm fires were kindled upon the hills; alarm guns boomed from post to post; the country was soon on the alert.

Wayne was not "Mad Anthony" on the present occasion. All his measures were taken with judgment and

* Quincy's *Memoir of Major Shaw*, p. 85.

forecast. He sent provisions after the mutineers, lest they should supply their wants from the country people by force. Two officers of rank spurred to Philadelphia, to apprise Congress of the approach of the insurgents, and put it upon its guard. Wayne sent a despatch with news of the outbreak to Washington; he then mounted his horse, and accompanied by Colonels Butler and Stewart, two officers popular with the troops, set off after the mutineers, either to bring them to a halt, or to keep with them, and seek every occasion to exert a favorable influence over them.

Washington received Wayne's letter at his head-quarters at New Windsor on the 3d of January. His first impulse was to set out at once for the insurgent camp. Second thoughts showed the impolicy of such a move. Before he could overtake the mutineers, they would either have returned to their duty, or their affair would be in the hands of Congress. How far, too, could his own troops be left with safety, distressed as they were for clothing and provisions? Beside, the navigation of the Hudson was still open; should any disaffection appear in the neighboring garrison of West Point, the British might send up an expedition from New York to take advantage of it. Under these circumstances, he determined to continue at New Windsor.

He wrote to Wayne, however, approving of his intention to keep with the troops, and improve every favorable interval of passion. His letter breathes that pater-

nal spirit with which he watched over the army; and that admirable moderation mingled with discipline with which he managed and moulded their wayward moods. "Opposition," said he, "as it did not succeed in the first instance, cannot be effectual while the men remain together, but will keep alive resentment, and may tempt them to turn about and go in a body to the enemy; who, by their emissaries, will use every argument and means in their power to persuade them that it is their only asylum; which if they find their passage stopped at the Delaware, and hear that the Jersey militia are collecting in their rear, they may think but too probable. I would, therefore, recommend it to you to cross the Delaware with them, draw from them what they conceive to be their principal grievances, and promise faithfully to represent to Congress and to the State the substance of them, and endeavor to obtain a redress. If they could be stopped at Bristol or Germantown, the better. I look upon it, that if you can bring them to a negotiation, matters may be afterwards accommodated; but that an attempt to reduce them by force will either drive them to the enemy, or dissipate them in such a manner that they will never be recovered."

How clearly one reads in this letter that temperate and magnanimous spirit which moved over the troubled waters of the Revolution, allayed the fury of the storms, and controlled everything into place.

Having visited the Highland posts of the Hudson, and

satisfied himself of the fidelity of the garrisons, Washington ordered a detachment of eleven hundred men to be ready to march at a moment's warning. General Knox, also, was despatched by him to the Eastern States, to represent to their governments the alarming crisis produced by a long neglect of the subsistence of the army, and to urge them to send on immediately money, clothing, and other supplies for their respective lines.

In the meantime, as Washington had apprehended, Sir Henry Clinton received intelligence at New York of the mutiny, and hastened to profit by it. Emissaries were despatched to the camp of the mutineers holding out offers of pardon, protection, and ample pay, if they would return to their allegiance to the crown. On the 4th of January, although the rain poured in torrents, troops and cannon were hurried on board of vessels of every description, and transported to Staten Island, Sir Henry accompanying them. There they were to be held in readiness, either to land at Amboy in the Jerseys, should the revolters be drawn in that direction, or to make a dash at West Point, should the departure of Washington leave that post assailable.

General Wayne and his companions, Colonels Butler and Stewart, had overtaken the insurgent troops on the 3d of January, at Middlebrook. They were proceeding in military form, under the control of a self-constituted board of sergeants whose orders were implicitly obeyed

A sergeant-major, who had formerly deserted from the British army, had the general command.

Conferences were held by Wayne with sergeants delegated from each regiment. They appeared to be satisfied with the mode and promises of redress held out to them: but the main body of the mutineers persisted in revolt, and proceeded on the next day to Princeton. Wayne hoped they might continue further on, and would gladly have seen them across the Delaware, beyond the influence of the enemy; but their leaders clung to Princeton, lest in further movements they might not be able to keep their followers together. Their proceedings continued to be orderly; military forms were still observed; they obeyed their leaders, behaved well to the people of the country, and committed no excesses.

General Wayne and Colonels Butler and Stewart remained with them in an equivocal position; popular, but without authority, and almost in durance. The insurgents professed themselves still ready to march under them against the enemy, but would permit none other of their former officers to come among them. The Marquis de Lafayette, General St. Clair, and Colonel Laurens, the newly-appointed minister to France, arrived at the camp and were admitted; but afterwards were ordered away at a short notice.

The news of the revolt caused great consternation in Philadelphia. A committee of Congress set off to meet the insurgents, accompanied by Reed, the president of

Pennsylvania, and one or two other officers, and escorted by a city troop of horse. The committee halted at Trenton, whence President Reed wrote to Wayne requesting a personal interview at four o'clock in the afternoon, at four miles' distance from Princeton. Wayne was moreover told to inform the troops, that he (Reed) would be there to receive any propositions from them, and redress any injuries they might have sustained; but that after the indignities they had offered to the marquis and General St. Clair, he could not venture to put himself in their power.

Wayne, knowing that the letter was intended for his troops more than for himself, read it publicly on the parade. It had a good effect upon the sergeants and many of the men. The idea that the president of their State should have to leave the seat of government and stoop to treat with them, touched their sectional pride and their home feelings. They gathered round the horseman who had brought the letter, and inquired anxiously whether President Reed was unkindly disposed towards them; intimating privately their dislike to the business in which they were engaged.

Still, it was not thought prudent for President Reed to trust himself within their camp. Wayne promised to meet him on the following day (7th), though it seemed uncertain whether he was master of himself, or whether he was not a kind of prisoner. Tidings had just been received of the movements of Sir Henry Clinton, and of

tempting overtures he intended to make, and it was feared the men might listen to them. Three of the light horse were sent in the direction of Amboy to keep a look-out for any landing of the enemy.

At this critical juncture, two of Sir Henry's emissaries arrived in the camp, and delivered to the leaders of the malcontents a paper containing his seductive proposals and promises. The mutineers, though openly arrayed in arms against their government, spurned at the idea of turning "Arnolds," as they termed it. The emissaries were seized and conducted to General Wayne, who placed them in confinement, promising that they should be liberated, should the pending negotiation fail.

This incident had a great effect in inspiring hope of the ultimate loyalty of the troops; and the favorable representations of the temper of the men, made by General Wayne in a personal interview, determined President Reed to venture among them. The consequences of their desertion to the enemy were too alarming to be risked. "I have but one life to lose," said he, "and my country has the first claim to it." *

As he approached Princeton with his suite, he found guards regularly posted, who turned out and saluted him in military style. The whole line was drawn out under arms near the college, and the artillery on the point of firing a salute. He prevented it, lest it should alarm the

* Letter to the Executive Council.

country. It was a hard task for him to ride along the line as if reviewing troops regularly organized; but the crisis required some sacrifice of the kind. The sergeants were all in the places of their respective officers, and saluted the president as he passed; never were mutineers more orderly and decorous.

The propositions now offered to the troops were: To discharge all those who had enlisted indefinitely for three years or during the war; the fact to be inquired into by three commissioners appointed by the executive—where the original enlistment could not be produced in evidence, the oath of the soldier to suffice.

To give immediate certificates for the deficit in their pay caused by the depreciation of the currency, and the arrearages to be settled as soon as circumstances would permit.

To furnish them immediately with certain specified articles of clothing which were most wanted.

These propositions proving satisfactory, the troops set out for Trenton, where the negotiation was concluded.

Most of the artillerists and many of the infantry obtained their discharges; some on their oaths, others on account of the vague terms under which they had been enlisted; forty days' furlough was given to the rest, and thus, for a time, the whole insurgent force was dissolved.

The two spies who had tampered with the fidelity of the troops, were tried by a court-martial, found guilty, ard hanged at the cross-roads near Trenton. A reward

of fifty guineas each, was offered to two sergeants who had arrested and delivered them up. They declined accepting it, saying they had merely acted by order of the board of sergeants. The hundred guineas were then offered to the board. Their reply is worthy of record. "It was not," said they, "for the sake or through any expectation of reward, but for the love of our country, that we sent the spies immediately to General Wayne; we therefore do not consider ourselves entitled to any other reward but the love of our country, and do jointly agree to accept of no other."

The accommodation entered into with the mutineers of the Pennsylvania line appeared to Washington of doubtful policy, and likely to have a pernicious effect on the whole army. His apprehensions were soon justified by events. On the night of the 20th of January, a part of the Jersey troops, stationed at Pompton, rose in arms claiming the same terms just yielded to the Pennsylvanians. For a time, it was feared the revolt would spread throughout the line.

Sir Henry Clinton was again on the alert. Troops were sent to Staten Island to be ready to cross into the Jerseys, and an emissary was despatched to tempt the mutineers with seductive offers.

In this instance, Washington adopted a more rigorous course than in the other. The present insurgents were not so formidable in point of numbers as the Pennsylvanians; the greater part of them, also, were foreigners,

for whom he felt less sympathy than for native troops. He was convinced, too, of the fidelity of the troops under his immediate command, who were from the Eastern States. A detachment from the Massachusetts line was sent under Major-general Howe, who was instructed to compel the mutineers to unconditional submission; to grant them no terms while in arms, or in a state of resistance; and on their surrender, instantly to execute a few of the most active and incendiary leaders. "You will also try," added he, "to avail yourself of the services of the militia, representing to them how dangerous to civil liberty is the precedent of armed soldiers dictating to their country."

His orders were punctually obeyed, and were crowned with complete success. Howe had the good fortune, after a tedious night march, to surprise the mutineers napping in their huts just at daybreak. Five minutes only were allowed them to parade without their arms and give up the ringleaders. This was instantly complied with, and two of them were executed on the spot. Thus the mutiny was quelled, the officers resumed their command, and all things were restored to order.*

Thus terminated an insurrection, which, for a time, had spread alarm among the friends of American liberty, and excited the highest hopes of its foes. The circumstances connected with it had ultimately a beneficial

* *Memoir of Major Shaw*, by Hon. Josiah Quincy, p. 89.

effect in strengthening the confidence of those friends, by proving that, however the Americans might quarrel with their own government, nothing could again rally them under the royal standard.

A great cause of satisfaction to Washington was the ratification of the articles of confederation between the States, which took place not long after this agitating juncture. A set of articles had been submitted to Congress by Dr. Franklin, as far back as 1775. A form had been prepared and digested by a committee in 1776, and agreed upon, with some modifications, in 1777, but had ever since remained in abeyance, in consequence of objections made by individual States. The confederation was now complete, and Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, congratulated him and the body over which he presided, on an event long wished for, and which he hoped would have the happiest effects upon the politics of this country, and be of essential service to our cause in Europe.

It was, after all, an instrument far less efficacious than its advocates had anticipated; but it served an important purpose in binding the States together as a nation, and keeping them from falling asunder into individual powers, after the pressure of external danger should cease to operate.

CHAPTER XVII.

EXPEDITION OF ARNOLD INTO VIRGINIA.—BUCCANEERING RAVAGES.—CHECKED BY STEUBEN.—ARNOLD AT PORTSMOUTH.—CONGRESS RESOLVES TO FORM HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.—HAMILTON SUGGESTED BY SULLIVAN FOR DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE.—HIGH OPINION OF HIM EXPRESSED BY WASHINGTON.—MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN HAMILTON AND THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

THE armament with which Arnold boasted he was "to shake the continent," met with that boisterous weather which often rages along our coast in the winter. His ships were tempest-tost and scattered, and half of his cavalry horses and several of his guns had to be thrown overboard. It was the close of the year when he anchored in the Chesapeake.

Virginia, at the time, was almost in a defenseless state. Baron Steuben, who had the general command there, had recently detached such of his regular troops as were clothed and equipped, to the South, to reinforce General Greene. The remainder, five or six hundred in number, deficient in clothing, blankets, and tents, were scarcely fit to take the field, and the volunteers and militia lately encamped before Portsmouth, had been disbanded. Governor Jefferson, on hearing of the arrival of the fleet,

called out the militia from the neighboring counties ; but few could be collected on the spur of the moment, for the whole country was terror-stricken and in confusion. Having land and sea forces at his command, Arnold opened the new year with a buccaneering ravage. Ascending James River with some small vessels which he had captured, he landed on the fourth of January with nine hundred men at Westover, about twenty-five miles below Richmond, and pushed for the latter place, at that time little more than a village, though the metropolis of Virginia. Halting for the night within twelve miles of it, he advanced on the following day with as much military parade as possible, so as to strike terror into a militia patrol, which fled back to Richmond, reporting that a British force, fifteen hundred strong, was at hand.

It was Arnold's hope to capture the governor ; but the latter, after providing for the security of as much as possible of the public stores, had left Richmond the evening before on horseback to join his family at Tuckahoe, whence, on the following day, he conveyed them to a place of safety. Governor Jefferson got back by noon to Manchester, on the opposite side of James River, in time to see Arnold's marauders march into the town. Many of the inhabitants had fled to the country ; some stood terrified spectators on the hills, not more than two hundred men were in arms for the defense of the place ; these, after firing a few volleys, retreated to Richmond and Shockoe Hills, whence they were driven by the cav-

alry, and Arnold had possession of the capital. He sent some of the citizens to the governor, offering to spare the town, provided his ships might come up James River to be laden with tobacco from the warehouses. His offer was indignantly rejected, whereupon fire was set to the public edifices, stores, and workshops; private houses were pillaged, and a great quantity of tobacco consumed.

While this was going on, Colonel Simcoe had been detached to Westham, six miles up the river, where he destroyed a cannon foundry and sacked a public magazine; broke off the trunnions of the cannon, and threw into the river the powder which he could not carry away, and, after effecting a complete devastation, rejoined Arnold at Richmond, which during the ensuing night resounded with the drunken orgies of the soldiery.

Having completed his ravage at Richmond, Arnold reëmbarked at Westover and fell slowly down the river, landing occasionally to burn, plunder, and destroy; pursued by Steuben with a few continental troops and all the militia that he could muster. General Nelson, also, with similar levies opposed him. Lower down the river some skirmishing took place, a few of Arnold's troops were killed and a number wounded, but he made his way to Portsmouth, opposite Norfolk, where he took post on the 20th of January, and proceeded to fortify.

Steuben would have attempted to drive him from this position, but his means were totally inadequate. Collecting from various parts of the country all the force

that could be mustered, he so disposed it at different points as to hem the traitor in, prevent his making further incursions, and drive him back to his intrenchments should he attempt any.

Governor Jefferson returned to Richmond after the enemy had left it, and wrote thence to the commander-in-chief an account of this ravaging incursion of "the parricide Arnold." It was mortifying to Washington to see so inconsiderable a party committing such extensive depredations with impunity, but it was his opinion that their principal object was to make a diversion in favor of Cornwallis; and as the evils to be apprehended from Arnold's predatory incursions were not to be compared with the injury to the common cause and the danger to Virginia in particular, which would result from the conquest of the States to the southward, he adjured Jefferson not to permit attention to immediate safety so to engross his thoughts as to divert him from measures for reinforcing the southern army.

About this time an important resolution was adopted in Congress. Washington had repeatedly, in his communications to that body, attributed much of the distresses and disasters of the war to the congressional mode of conducting business through committees and "boards," thus causing irregularity and delay, preventing secrecy and augmenting expense. He was greatly rejoiced, therefore, when Congress decided to appoint heads of departments; secretaries of foreign affairs, of

war and of marine, and a superintendent of finance. "I am happy, thrice happy, on private as well as public account," writes he, "to find that these are in train. For it will ease my shoulders of an immense burthen, which the deranged and perplexed situation of our affairs, and the distresses of every department of the army, had placed upon them."

General Sullivan, to whom this was written, and who was in Congress, was a warm friend of Washington's aide-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton, and he sounded the commander-in-chief as to the qualifications of the colonel to take charge of the department of finance. "I am unable to answer," replied Washington, "because I never entered upon a discussion with him, but this I can venture to advance, from a thorough knowledge of him, that there are few men to be found of his age, who have more general knowledge than he possesses; and none whose soul is more firmly engaged in the cause, or who exceeds him in probity and sterling virtue."

This was a warm eulogium for one of Washington's circumspect character, but it was sincere. Hamilton had been four years in his military family, and always treated by him with marked attention and regard. Indeed, it had surprised many to see so young a man admitted like a veteran into his counsels. It was but a few days after Washington had penned the eulogium just quoted, when a scene took place between him and the man he had praised so liberally, that caused him deep chagrin. We

give it as related by Hamilton himself, in a letter to General Schuyler, one of whose daughters he had recently married.

"An unexpected change has taken place in my situation," writes Hamilton (February 18). "I am no longer a member of the general's family. This information will surprise you, and the manner of the change will surprise you more. Two days ago the general and I passed each other on the stairs: he told me he wanted to speak to me. I answered that I would wait on him immediately. I went below and delivered Mr. Tilghman a letter to be sent to the commissary, containing an order of a pressing and interesting nature.

"Returning to the general, I was stopped on the way by the Marquis de Lafayette, and we conversed together about a minute on a matter of business. He can testify how impatient I was to get back, and that I left him in a manner which, but for our intimacy, would have been more than abrupt. Instead of finding the general, as is usual, in his room, I met him at the head of the stairs, where, accosting me in an angry tone, 'Colonel Hamilton (said he), you have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes;—I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect.' I replied, without petulancy, but with decision, 'I am not conscious of it, sir; but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part.' 'Very well, sir (said he), if it be your choice,' or something to this effect, and we separated. I sincerely believe

my absence, which gave so much umbrage, did not last two minutes.

"In less than an hour after, Tilghman came to me in the general's name, assuring me of his great confidence in my abilities, integrity, usefulness, etc., and of his desire, in a candid conversation, to heal a difference which could not have happened but in a moment of passion. I requested Mr. Tilghman to tell him,—1st. That I had taken my resolution in a manner not to be revoked. 2d. That as a conversation could serve no other purpose than to produce explanations, mutually disagreeable, though I certainly would not refuse an interview, if he desired it, yet I would be happy, if he would permit me to decline it. 3d. That though determined to leave the family, the same principles which had kept me so long in it, would continue to direct my conduct towards him when out of it. 4th. That, however, I did not wish to distress him, or the public business, by quitting him before he could derive other assistance by the return of some of the gentlemen who were absent. 5th. And that, in the meantime, it depended on him to let our behavior to each other be the same as if nothing had happened. He consented to decline the conversation, and thanked me for my offer of continuing my aid in the manner I had mentioned.

"I have given you so particular a detail of our difference, from the desire I have to justify myself in your opinion. Perhaps you may think I was precipitate in

rejecting the overture made by the general to an accommodation. I assure you, my dear sir, it was not the effect of resentment; it was the deliberate result of maxims I had long formed for the government of my own conduct."

In considering this occurrence, as stated by Hamilton himself, we think he was in the wrong. His hurrying past the general on the stairs without pausing, although the latter expressed a wish to speak with him; his giving no reason for his haste, which, however "pressing" the letter he had to deliver, he could have spared at least a moment to do; his tarrying below to talk with the Marquis de Lafayette, the general all this time remaining at the head of the stairs, had certainly an air of great disrespect, and we do not wonder that the commander-in-chief was deeply offended at being so treated by his youthful aide-de-camp. His expression of displeasure was measured and dignified, however irritated he may have been, and such an explanation, at least, was due to him, as Hamilton subsequently rendered to General Schuyler, through a desire to justify himself in that gentleman's opinion. The reply of Hamilton, on the contrary, savored very much of petulance, however devoid he may have considered it of that quality, and his avowed determination "to part," simply because taxed by the general with want of respect, was singularly curt and abrupt.

Washington's subsequent overture, intended to soothe the wounded sensitiveness of Hamilton and soften the

recent rebuke, by assurances of unaltered confidence and esteem, strikes us as in the highest degree noble and gracious, and furnishes another instance of that magnanimity which governed his whole conduct. We trust that General Schuyler, in reply to Hamilton's appeal, intimated that he had indeed been precipitate in rejecting such an overture.

The following passage in Hamilton's letter to Schuyler, gives the real key to his conduct on this occasion :

"I always disliked the office of an aide-de-camp, as having in it a kind of personal dependence. I refused to serve in this capacity with two major-generals, at an early period of the war. Infected, however, with the enthusiasm of the times, an idea of the general's character overcame my scruples, and induced me to accept his invitation to enter into his family. . . . . It has been often with great difficulty that I have prevailed on myself not to renounce it ; but while, from motives of public utility, I was doing violence to my feelings, I was always determined, if there should ever happen a breach between us, never to consent to an accommodation. I was persuaded that when once that nice barrier which marked the boundaries of what we owed to each other should be thrown down, it might be propped again, but could never be restored."

Hamilton, in fact, had long been ambitious of an independent position, and of some opportunity, as he said, "to raise his character above mediority." When an ex-

pedition by Lafayette against Staten Island had been meditated in the autumn of 1780, he had applied to the commander-in-chief, through the marquis, for the command of a battalion, which was without a field officer. Washington had declined on the ground that giving him a whole battalion might be a subject of dissatisfaction, and that, should any accident happen to him in the actual state of affairs at head-quarters, the commander-in-chief would be embarrassed for want of his assistance.

He had next been desirous of the post of adjutant-general, which Colonel Alexander Scammel was about to resign, and was recommended for that office by Lafayette and Greene, but, before their recommendations reached Washington, he had already sent in to Congress the name of Brigadier-general Hand, who received the nomination.

These disappointments may have rendered Hamilton doubtful of his being properly appreciated by the commander-in-chief; impaired his devotion to him, and determined him, as he says, "if there should ever happen a breach between them, never to consent to an accommodation." It almost looks as if, in his high-strung and sensitive mood, he had been on the watch for an offense, and had grasped at the shadow of one.

Some short time after the rupture had taken place, Washington received a letter from Lafayette, then absent in Virginia, in which the marquis observes, "Considering the footing I am upon with your Excellency, it

would, perhaps, appear strange to you, that I never mentioned a circumstance which lately happened in your family. I was the first who knew of it, and from that moment exerted every means in my power to prevent a separation, which I knew was not agreeable to your Excellency. To this measure I was prompted by affection to you; but I thought it was improper to mention anything about it, until you were pleased to impart it to me."

The following was Washington's reply: "The event, which you seem to speak of with regret, my friendship for you would most assuredly have induced me to impart to you the moment it happened, had it not been for the request of Hamilton, who desired that no mention should be made of it. Why this injunction on me, while he was communicating it himself, is a little extraordinary. But I complied, and religiously fulfilled it."

We are happy to add, that though a temporary coolness took place between the commander-in-chief and his late favorite aide-de-camp, it was but temporary. The friendship between these illustrious men was destined to survive the Revolution, and to signalize itself through many eventful years, and stands recorded in the correspondence of Washington almost at the last moment of his life.*

* His last letter to Hamilton, in which he assures him of "his very great esteem and regard," was written by Washington but two days before his death. Sparks, xi. 469.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CORNWALLIS PREPARES TO INVADE NORTH CAROLINA. — TARLETON SENT AGAINST MORGAN.—BATTLE AT COWPENS.—MORGAN PUSHES FOR THE CATAWBA WITH SPOILS AND PRISONERS.—CORNWALLIS ENDEAVORS TO INTERCEPT HIM.—THE RISING OF THE RIVER.—CORNWALLIS AT RAMSOUR'S MILLS.

THE stress of war, as Washington apprehended, was at present shifted to the South. In a former chapter, we left General Greene, in the latter part of December, posted with one division of his army on the east side of the Pedee River in North Carolina, having detached General Morgan with the other division, one thousand strong, to take post near the confluence of the Pacolet and Broad rivers in South Carolina.

Cornwallis lay encamped about seventy miles to the southwest of Greene, at Winnsborough in Fairfield district. General Leslie had recently arrived at Charleston from Virginia, and was advancing to reinforce him with fifteen hundred men. This would give Cornwallis such a superiority of force, that he prepared for a second invasion of North Carolina. His plan was to leave Lord Rawdon at the central post of Camden with a considera-

ble body of troops to keep all quiet, while his lordship, by rapid marches, would throw himself between Greene and Virginia, cut him off from all reinforcements in that quarter, and oblige him either to make battle with his present force, or retreat precipitately from North Carolina, which would be disgraceful.* In either case Cornwallis counted on a general rising of the royalists; a re-establishment of regal government in the Carolinas, and the clearing away of all impediments to further triumphs in Virginia and Maryland.

By recent information, he learnt that Morgan had passed both the Catawba and Broad rivers, and was about seventy miles to the northwest of him, on his way to the district of Ninety-six. As he might prove extremely formidable if left in his rear, Tarleton was sent in quest of him, with about three hundred and fifty of his famous cavalry, a corps of legion and light infantry, and a number of the royal artillery with two field-pieces; about eleven hundred choice troops in all. His instructions were to pass Broad River for the protection of Ninety-six, and either to strike at Morgan and push him to the utmost; or to drive him out of the country, so as to prevent his giving any trouble on that side.

Cornwallis moved with his main force on the 12th of December, in a northwest direction between the Broad River and the Catawba, leading toward the back country.

* Cornwallis to Lord George Germain, March 17.

This was for the purpose of crossing the great rivers at their fords near their sources; for they are fed by innumerable petty streams which drain the mountains, and are apt, in the winter time, when storms of rain prevail, to swell and become impassable below their forks. He took this route also, to cut off Morgan's retreat, or prevent his junction with Greene, should Tarleton's expedition fail of its object. General Leslie, whose arrival was daily expected, was to move up along the eastern side of the Wateree and Catawba, keeping parallel with his lordship and joining him above. Everything on the part of Cornwallis was well planned, and seemed to promise him a successful campaign.

Tarleton, after several days' hard marching, came upon the traces of Morgan, who was posted on the north bank of the Pacolet, to guard the passes of that river. He sent word to Cornwallis of his intention to force a passage across the river, and compel Morgan either to fight or retreat, and suggested that his lordship should proceed up the eastern bank of Broad River, so as to be at hand to coöperate. His lordship, in consequence, took up a position at Turkey Creek, on Broad River.

Morgan had been recruited by North Carolina and Georgia militia, so that his force was nearly equal in number to that of Tarleton, but, in point of cavalry and discipline, vastly inferior. Cornwallis, too, was on his left, and might get in his rear; checking his impulse, therefore, to dispute the passage of the Pacolet, he

crossed that stream and retreated towards the upper fords of Broad River.

Tarleton reached the Pacolet on the evening of the 15th, but halted on observing some troops on the opposite bank. It was merely a party of observation which Morgan had left there, but he supposed that officer to be there in full force. After some manœuvring to deceive his adversary, he crossed the river before daylight at Easterwood shoals. There was no opposition. Still he proceeded warily, until he learnt that Morgan, instead of being in his neighborhood, was in full march toward Broad River. Tarleton now pressed on in pursuit. At ten o'clock at night he reached an encampment which Morgan had abandoned a few hours previously, apparently in great haste, for the camp-fires were still smoking, and provisions had been left behind half cooked. Eager to come upon his enemy while in the confusion of a hurried flight, Tarleton allowed his exhausted troops but a brief repose, and, leaving his baggage under a guard, resumed his dogged march about two o'clock in the night; tramping forward through swamps and rugged broken grounds, round the western side of Thickety Mountain. A little before daylight of the 17th, he captured two videttes, from whom he learnt, to his surprise, that Morgan, instead of a headlong retreat, had taken a night's repose, and was actually preparing to give him battle.

Morgan, in fact, had been urged by his officers to re-

treat across Broad River, which was near by, and make for the mountainous country; but, closely pressed as he was, he feared to be overtaken while fording the river, and while his troops were fatigued, and in confusion; besides, being now nearly equal in number to the enemy, military pride would not suffer him to avoid a combat.

The place where he came to halt, was known in the early grants by the name of Hannah's Cowpens, being part of a grazing establishment of a man named Hannah. It was in an open wood, favorable to the action of cavalry. There were two eminences of unequal height, and separated from each other by an interval about eighty yards wide. To the first eminence, which was the highest, there was an easy ascent of about three hundred yards. On these heights Morgan had posted himself. His flanks were unprotected, and the Broad River, running parallel on his rear, about six miles distant, and winding round on the left, would cut off retreat, should the day prove unfortunate.

The ground, in the opinion of tacticians, was not well chosen; Morgan, a veteran bush-fighter, vindicated it in after times in his own characteristic way. "Had I crossed the river, one half of the militia would have abandoned me. Had a swamp been in view, they would have made for it. As to covering my wings, I knew the foe I had to deal with, and that there would be nothing but downright fighting. As to a retreat, I wished to cut off all hope of one. Should Tarleton surround me with his cavalry, it

would keep my troops from breaking away, and make them depend upon their bayonets. When men are forced to fight, they will sell their lives dearly."

In arranging his troops for action, he drew out his infantry in two lines. The first was composed of the North and South Carolina militia, under Colonel Pickens, having an advanced corps of North Carolina and Georgia volunteer riflemen. This line, on which he had the least dependence, was charged to wait until the enemy were within dead shot; then to take good aim, fire two volleys and fall back.

The second line, drawn up a moderate distance in the rear of the first, and near the brow of the main eminence, was composed of Colonel Howard's light infantry and the Virginia riflemen; all Continental troops. They were informed of the orders which had been given to the first line, lest they should mistake their falling back for a retreat. Colonel Howard had the command of this line, on which the greatest reliance was placed.

About a hundred and fifty yards in the rear of the second line, and on the slope of the lesser eminence, was Colonel Washington's troop of cavalry, about eighty strong; with about fifty mounted Carolinian volunteers, under Major McCall, armed with sabres and pistols.

British writers of the day gave Morgan credit for uncommon ability and judgment in the disposition of his force; placing the militia, in whom he had no great confidence, in full view on the edge of the wood, and keeping

his best troops out of sight, but drawn up in excellent order and prepared for all events.*

It was about eight o'clock in the morning (January 17th), when Tarleton came up. The position of the Americans seemed to him to give great advantage to his cavalry, and he made hasty preparation for immediate attack, anticipating an easy victory. Part of his infantry he formed into a line, with dragoons on each flank. The rest of the infantry and cavalry were to be a reserve, and to wait for orders.

There was a physical difference in the condition of the adverse troops. The British were haggard from want of sleep and a rough night-tramp; the Americans, on the contrary, were fresh from a night's rest, invigorated by a morning's meal, and deliberately drawn up. Tarleton took no notice of these circumstances, or disregarded them. Impetuous at all times, and now confident of victory, he did not even wait until the reserve could be placed, but led on his first line, which rushed shouting to the attack. The North Carolina and Georgia riflemen in the advance, delivered their fire with effect, and fell back to the flanks of Pickens's militia. These, as they had been instructed, waited until the enemy were within fifty yards, and then made a destructive volley, but soon gave way before the push of the bayonet. The British infantry pushed up to the second line, while forty of their

* *Annual Register* 1781, p. 56.

cavalry attacked it on the right, seeking to turn its flank. Colonel Howard made a brave stand, and for some time there was a bloody conflict; seeing himself, however, in danger of being outflanked, he endeavored to change his front to the right. His orders were misunderstood, and his troops were falling into confusion, when Morgan rode up and ordered them to retreat over the hill, where Colonel Washington's cavalry were hurried forward for their protection.

The British, seeing the troops retiring over the hill, rushed forward irregularly in pursuit of what they deemed a routed foe. To their astonishment, they were met by Colonel Washington's dragoons, who spurred on them impetuously, while Howard's infantry, facing about, gave them an effective volley of musketry, and then charged with the bayonet.

The enemy now fell into complete confusion. Some few artillerymen attempted to defend their guns, but were cut down or taken prisoners, and the cannon and colors captured. A panic seized upon the British troops, aided no doubt by fatigue and exhaustion. A general flight took place. Tarleton endeavored to bring his legion cavalry into action to retrieve the day. They had stood aloof as a reserve, and now, infected by the panic, turned their backs upon their commander, and galloped off through the woods, riding over the flying infantry.

Fourteen of his officers, however, and forty of his dragoons, remained true to him; with these he attempted

to withstand the attack of Washington's cavalry, and a fierce melée took place; but on the approach of Howard's infantry Tarleton gave up all for lost, and spurred off with his few but faithful adherents, trusting to the speed of their horses for safety. They made for Hamilton's Ford on Broad River, thence to seek the main army under Cornwallis.

The loss of the British in this action was ten officers and above one hundred men killed, two hundred wounded, and between five and six hundred rank and file made prisoners; while the Americans had but twelve men killed and sixty wounded. The disparity of loss shows how complete had been the confusion and defeat of the enemy. "During the whole period of the war," says one of their own writers, "no other action reflected so much dishonor on the British arms."*

The spoils taken by Morgan, according to his own account, were two field-pieces, two standards, eight hundred muskets, one travelling forge, thirty-five wagons, seventy negroes, upwards of one hundred dragoon-horses, and all the music. The enemy, however, had destroyed most of their baggage, which was immense.

Morgan did not linger on the field of battle. Leaving Colonel Pickens with a body of militia under the protection of a flag, to bury the dead and provide for the wounded of both armies, he set out the same day about

* Stedman, ii. p. 324.

noon, with his prisoners and spoils. Lord Cornwallis, with his main force, was at Turkey Creek, only twenty-five miles distant, and must soon hear of the late battle. His object was to get to the Catawba before he could be intercepted by his lordship, who lay nearer than he did to the fords of that river. Before nightfall he crossed Broad River at the Cherokee Ford, and halted for a few hours on its northern bank. Before daylight of the 18th he was again on the march. Colonel Washington, who had been in pursuit of the enemy, rejoined him in the course of the day, as also did Colonel Pickens, who had left such of the wounded as could not be moved, under the protection of the flag of truce.

Still fearing that he might be intercepted before he could reach the Catawba, he put his prisoners in charge of Colonel Washington and the cavalry, with orders to move higher up into the country and cross the main Catawba at the Island Ford; while he himself pushed forward for that river by the direct route; thus to distract the attention of the enemy should they be in pursuit, and to secure his prisoners from being recaptured.

Cornwallis, on the eventful day of the 17th, was at his camp on Turkey Creek, confidently waiting for tidings from Tarleton of a new triumph, when, towards evening, some of his routed dragoons came straggling into camp, haggard and forlorn, to tell the tale of his defeat. It was a thunderstroke. Tarleton defeated! and by the rude soldier he had been so sure of entrapping! It

seemed incredible. It was confirmed, however, the next morning, by the arrival of Tarleton himself, discomfited and crest-fallen. In his account of the recent battle, he represented the force under Morgan to be two thousand. This exaggerated estimate, together with the idea that the militia would now be out in great force, rendered his lordship cautious. Supposing that Morgan, elated by his victory, would linger near the scene of his triumph, or advance toward Ninety-Six, Cornwallis remained a day or two at Turkey Creek to collect the scattered remains of Tarleton's forces, and to wait the arrival of General Leslie, whose march had been much retarded by the waters, but who "was at last out of the swamps."

On the 19th, having been rejoined by Leslie, his lordship moved towards King's Creek, and thence in the direction of King's Mountain, until informed of Morgan's retreat toward the Catawba. Cornwallis now altered his course in that direction, and, trusting that Morgan, encumbered, as he supposed him to be, by prisoners and spoils, might be overtaken before he could cross that river, detached a part of his force, without baggage, in pursuit of him, while he followed on with the remainder.

Nothing, say the British chroniclers, could exceed the exertions of the detachment; but Morgan succeeded in reaching the Catawba and crossing it in the evening, just two hours before those in pursuit of him arrived on its

banks. A heavy rain came on and fell all night, and by daybreak the river was so swollen as to be impassable.*

This sudden swelling of the river was considered by the Americans as something providential. It continued for several days, and gave Morgan time to send off his prisoners who had crossed several miles above, and to call out the militia of Mecklenburg and Rowan counties to guard the fords of the river.†

Lord Cornwallis had moved slowly with his main body. He was encumbered by an immense train of baggage; the roads were through deep red clay, and the country was cut up by streams and morasses. It was not until the 25th, that he assembled his whole force at Ramsour's Mills, on the Little Catawba, as the south fork of that river is called, and learnt that Morgan had crossed the main stream. Now he felt the loss he had sustained, in the late defeat of Tarleton, of a great part of his light troops, which are the life and spirit of an army, and especially efficient in a thinly-peopled country of swamps, and streams, and forests, like that he was entangled in.

In this crippled condition, he determined to relieve his

* Stedman, ii. 326. Cornwallis to Sir H. Clinton; see also *Remembrancer*, 1781, part 1, 303.

† This sudden swelling of the river has been stated by some writers, as having taken place on the 29th, on the approach of Cornwallis's main force, whereas it took place on the 23d, on the approach of the *detachment* sent by his lordship in advance in pursuit of Morgan. The inaccuracy as to date has given rise to disputes among historians.

army of everything that could impede rapid movement in his future operations. Two days, therefore, were spent by him at Ramsour's Mills, in destroying all such baggage and stores as could possibly be spared. He began with his own. His officers followed his example. Superfluities of all kinds were sacrificed without flinching. Casks of wine and spirituous liquors were staved: quantities even of provisions were sacrificed. No wagons were spared but those laden with hospital stores, salt and ammunition, and four empty ones for the sick and wounded. The alacrity with which these sacrifices of comforts, conveniences, and even necessaries, were made, was honorable to both officers and men.*

The whole expedient was subsequently sneered at by Sir Henry Clinton, as being "something too like a Tartar move;" but his lordship was preparing for a trial of speed, where it was important to carry as light weight as possible.

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 53.

CHAPTER XIX.

GREENE JOINS MORGAN ON THE CATAWBA.—ADOPTS THE FABIAN POLICY.—MOVEMENT OF CORNWALLIS TO CROSS THE CATAWBA.—AFFAIR AT McGOWAN'S FORD.—MILITIA SURPRISED BY TARLETON AT TARRANT'S TAVERN.—CORNWALLIS CHECKED BY THE RISING OF THE YADKIN.—CONTEST OF SKILL AND SPEED OF THE TWO ARMIES IN A MARCH TO THE BANKS OF THE DAN.

GENERAL GREENE was gladdened by a letter from Morgan, written shortly after his defeat of Tarleton, and transmitted the news to Washington with his own generous comments. "The victory was complete," writes he, "and the action glorious. The brilliancy and success with which it was fought, does the highest honor to the American arms, and adds splendor to the character of the general and his officers. I must beg leave to recommend them to your Excellency's notice, and doubt not but from your representation, Congress will receive pleasure from testifying their approbation of their conduct."

Another letter from Morgan, written on the 25th, spoke of the approach of Cornwallis and his forces. "My numbers," writes he, "are at this time too weak to fight them. I intend to move towards Salisbury, to get near

the main army. I think it would be advisable to join our forces and fight them before they join Phillips, which they certainly will do if they are not stopped."

Greene had recently received intelligence of the landing of troops at Wilmington, from a British squadron, supposed to be a force under Arnold, destined to push up Cape Fear River, and coöperate with Cornwallis; he had to prepare, therefore, not only to succor Morgan, but to prevent this coöperation. He accordingly detached General Stevens with his Virginia militia (whose term of service was nearly expired) to take charge of Morgan's prisoners, and conduct them to Charlottesville in Virginia. At the same time he wrote to the governors of North Carolina and Virginia, for all the aid they could furnish; to Steuben, to hasten forward his recruits, and to Shelby, Campbell, and others, to take arms once more, and rival their achievements at King's Mountain.

This done, he left General Huger in command of the division on the Pedee, with orders to hasten on by forced marches to Salisbury, to join the other division: in the meantime he set off on horseback for Morgan's camp, attended merely by a guide, an aide-de-camp, and a sergeant's guard of dragoons. His object was to aid Morgan in assembling militia and checking the enemy until the junction of his forces could be effected. It was a hard ride of upwards of a hundred miles through a rough country. On the last day of January he reached Morgan's camp at Sherrard's Ford, on the east side of the Catawba.

The British army lay on the opposite side of the river, but a few miles distant from it, and appeared to be making preparations to force a passage across, as it was subsiding, and would soon be fordable. Greene supposed Cornwallis had in view a junction with Arnold at Cape Fear; he wrote, therefore, to General Huger to hurry on, so that with their united forces they could give his lordship a defeat before he could effect the junction. "*I am not without hopes*," writes he, "*of ruining Lord Cornwallis if he persists in his mad scheme of pushing through the country;* and it is my earnest desire to form a junction as early for this purpose as possible. Desire Colonel Lee to force a march to join us. *Here is a fine field, and great glory ahead.*"

More correct information relieved him from the apprehension of a coöperation of Arnold and Cornwallis. The British troops which landed at Wilmington, were merely a small detachment sent from Charleston to establish a military depot for the use of Cornwallis in his Southern campaign. They had taken possession of Wilmington without opposition.

Greene now changed his plans. He was aware of the ill-provided state of the British army, from the voluntary destruction of their wagons, tents, and baggage. Indeed, when he first heard of this measure, on his arriving at Sherrard's Ford, he had exclaimed, "Then Cornwallis is ours." His plan now was to tempt the enemy continually with the prospect of a battle, but continually to elude

one; to harass them by a long pursuit, draw them higher into the country, and gain time for the division advancing under Huger to join him. It was the Fabian policy that he had learnt under Washington, of whom he prided himself on being a disciple.

As the subsiding of the Catawba would enable Cornwallis to cross, Greene ordered Morgan to move off silently with his division, on the evening of the 31st, and to press his march all night, so as to gain a good start in advance, while he (Greene) would remain to bring on the militia, who were employed to check the enemy. These militia, assembled from the neighboring counties, did not exceed five hundred. Two hundred of them were distributed at different fords; the remaining three hundred, forming a corps of mounted riflemen under General Davidson, were to watch the movements of the enemy, and attack him wherever he should make his main attempt to cross. When the enemy should have actually crossed, the different bodies of militia were to make the best of their way to a rendezvous, sixteen miles distant, on the road to Salisbury, where Greene would be waiting to receive them, and conduct their further movements.

While these dispositions were being made by the American commander, Cornwallis was preparing to cross the river. The night of the 31st was chosen for the attempt. To divert the attention of the Americans, he detached Colonels Webster and Tarleton with a part of the army to a public ford called Beattie's Ford, where he supposed

Davidson to be stationed. There they were to open a cannonade, and make a feint of forcing a passage. The main attempt, however, was to be made six miles lower down, at McGowan's, a private and unfrequented ford, where little, if any, opposition was anticipated.

Cornwallis set out for that ford, with the main body of his army, at one o'clock in the morning. The night was dark and rainy. He had to make his way through a wood and swamp where there was no road. His artillery stuck fast. The line passed on without them. It was near daybreak by the time the head of the column reached the ford. To their surprise, they beheld numerous camp fires on the opposite bank. Word was hastily carried to Cornwallis that the ford was guarded. It was so indeed: Davidson was there with his riflemen.

His lordship would have waited for his artillery, but the rain was still falling, and might render the river unfordable. At that place the Catawba was nearly five hundred yards wide, about three feet deep, very rapid, and full of large stones. The troops entered the river in platoons, to support each other against the current, and were ordered not to fire until they should gain the opposite bank. Colonel Hall, of the light infantry of the guards, led the way; the grenadiers followed. The noise of the water and the darkness covered their movements until they were nearly half-way across, when they were descried by an American sentinel. He challenged them three times, and receiving no answer, fired. Terrified by

the report, the man who was guiding the British turned and fled. Colonel Hall, thus abandoned, led the way directly across the river; whereas the true ford inclined diagonally further down. Hall had to pass through deeper water, but he reached a part of the bank where it was unguarded. The American pickets, too, which had turned out at the alarm given by the sentinel, had to deliver a distant and slanting fire. Still it had its effect. Three of the British were killed, and thirty-six wounded. Colonel Hall pushed on gallantly, but was shot down as he ascended the bank. The horse on which Cornwallis rode was wounded, but the brave animal carried his lordship to the shore, where he sank under him. The steed of Brigadier-general O'Hara rolled over with him into the water, and General Leslie's horse was borne away by the tumultuous current and with difficulty recovered.

General Davidson hastened with his men towards the place where the British were landing. The latter formed as soon as they found themselves on firm ground, charged Davidson's men before he had time to get them in order, killed and wounded about forty, and put the rest to flight.

General Davidson was the last to leave the ground, and was killed just as he was mounting his horse. When the enemy had effected the passage, Tarleton was detached with his cavalry in pursuit of the militia, most of whom dispersed to their homes. Eager to avenge his late disgrace, he scoured the country, and made for Tarrant's

tavern, about ten miles distant, where about a hundred of them had assembled from different fords, on their way to the rendezvous, and were refreshing themselves. As Tarleton came clattering upon them with his legion, they ran to their horses, delivered a hasty fire, which emptied some of his saddles, and then made for the woods; a few of the worst mounted were overtaken and slain. Tarleton, in his account of his campaigns, made the number nearly fifty; but the report of a British officer, who rode over the ground shortly afterwards, reduced it to ten. The truth probably lay between. The survivors were dispersed beyond rallying. Tarleton, satisfied with his achievement, rejoined the main body. Had he scoured the country a few miles further, General Greene and his suite might have fallen into his hands.

The general, informed that the enemy had crossed the Catawba at daybreak, awaited anxiously at the rendezvous the arrival of the militia. It was not until after midnight that he heard of their utter dispersion, and of the death of Davidson. Apprehending the rapid advance of Cornwallis, he hastened to rejoin Morgan, who with his division was pushing forward for the Yadkin, first sending orders to General Huger to conduct the other division by the most direct route to Guilford Court-house, where the forces were to be united. Greene spurred forward through heavy rain and deep miry roads. It was a dreary ride and a lonely one, for he had detached his aides-de-camp in different directions, to collect the scat-

tered militia. At mid-day he alighted, weary and travel-stained, at the inn at Salisbury, where the army physician who had charge of the sick and wounded prisoners received him at the door, and inquired after his well-being. "Fatigued, hungry, alone, and penniless," was Greene's heavy-hearted reply. The landlady, Mrs. Elizabeth Steele, overheard his desponding words. While he was seated at table, she entered the room, closed the door, and drawing from under her apron two bags of money, which she had carefully hoarded in those precarious times, "Take these," said the noble-hearted woman; "you will want them, and I can do without them." This is one of the numberless instances of the devoted patriotism of our women during the Revolution. Their patriotism was apt to be purer and more disinterested than that of the men.

Cornwallis did not advance so rapidly as had been apprehended. After crossing the Catawba, he had to wait for his wagons and artillery, which had remained on the other side in the woods; so that by nightfall of the 1st of February he was not more than five miles on the road to Salisbury. Eager to come up with the Americans, he mounted some of the infantry upon the baggage horses, joined them to the cavalry, and sent the whole forward under General O'Hara. They arrived on the banks of the Yadkin at night, between the 2d and 3d of February, just in time to capture a few wagons lingering in the rear of the American army, which had passed. The riflemen who guarded them retreated after a short skirmish. There

were no boats with which to cross; the Americans had secured them on the other side. The rain which had fallen throughout the day had overflooded the ford by which the American cavalry had passed. The pursuers were again brought to a stand. After some doubt and delay, Cornwallis took his course up the south side of the Yadkin, and crossed by what is still called the Shallow Ford, while Greene continued on unmolested to Guilford Court-house, where he was joined by General Huger and his division on the 9th.

Cornwallis was now encamped about twenty-five miles above them, at the old Moravian town of Salem. Greene summoned a council of war (almost the only time he was known to do so), and submitted the question whether or not to offer battle. There was a unanimous vote in the negative. A fourth part of the force was on the sick list, from nakedness and exposure. The official returns gave but two thousand and thirty-six, rank and file, fit for duty. Of these upwards of six hundred were militia.

Cornwallis had from twenty-five hundred to three thousand men, including three hundred cavalry, all thoroughly disciplined and well equipped. It was determined to continue the retreat.

The great object of Greene now was to get across the river Dan and throw himself into Virginia. With the reinforcements and assistance he might there expect to find, he hoped to effect the salvation of the South, and prevent the dismemberment of the Union. The object of

Cornwallis was to get between him and Virginia, force him to a combat before he could receive those reinforcements, or enclose him in between the great rivers on the west, the sea on the east, and the two divisions of the British army under himself and Lord Rawdon on the north and south. His lordship had been informed that the lower part of the Dan, at present, could only be crossed in boats, and that the country could not afford a sufficient number for the passage of Greene's army; he trusted, therefore, to cut him off from the upper part of the river, where alone it was fordable. Greene, however, had provided against such a contingency. Boats had been secured at various places by his agents, and could be collected at a few hours' notice at the lower ferries. Instead, therefore, of striving with his lordship for the upper fords, Greene shaped his course for Boyd's and Irwin's fords, just above the confluence of the Dan and Staunton rivers which forms the Roanoke, and about seventy miles from Guilford Court-house. This would give him twenty-five miles advantage of Lord Cornwallis at the outset. General Kosciuszko was sent with a party in advance to collect the boats and throw up breastworks at the ferries.

In ordering his march, General Greene took the lead with the main body, the baggage, and stores. General Morgan would have had the command of the rear-guard, composed of seven hundred of the most alert and active troops, cavalry and light infantry; but, being disabled

by a violent attack of ague and rheumatism, it was given to Colonel Otho H. Williams (formerly adjutant-general), who had with him Colonels Howard, Washington, and Lee.

This corps, detached some distance in the rear, did infinite service. Being lightly equipped, it could manœuvre in front of the British line of march, break down bridges, sweep off provisions, and impede its progress in a variety of ways, while the main body moved forward unmolested. It was now that Cornwallis most felt the severity of the blow he had received at the battle of the Cowpens in the loss of his light troops, having so few to cope with the élite corps under Williams.

Great abilities were shown by the commanders on either side in this momentous trial of activity and skill. It was a long and severe march for both armies, through a wild and rough country, thinly peopled, cut up by streams, partly covered by forests, along deep and frozen roads, under drenching rains, without tents at night, and with scanty supplies of provisions. The British suffered the least, for they were well equipped and comfortably clad; whereas the poor Americans were badly off for clothing, and many of them without shoes. The patriot armies of the Revolution, however, were accustomed in their winter marches to leave evidences of their hardships in bloody footprints.

We forbear to enter into the details of this masterly retreat, the many stratagems and manœuvres of the covering party to delay and hoodwink the enemy. Tarleton

himself bears witness in his narrative, that every measure of the Americans was judiciously designed and vigorously executed. So much had Cornwallis been misinformed at the outset as to the means below of passing the river, and so difficult was it, from want of light troops, to gain information while on the march, that he pushed on in the firm conviction that he was driving the American army into a trap and would give it a signal blow before it could cross the Dan.

In the meantime, Greene, with the main body, reached the banks of the river, and succeeded in crossing over with ease in the course of a single day at Boyd's and Irwin's ferries, sending back word to Williams, who with his covering party was far in the rear. That intelligent officer encamped, as usual, in the evening, at a wary distance in front of the enemy, but stole a march upon them after dark, leaving his camp fires burning. He pushed on all night, arrived at the ferry in the morning of the 15th, having marched forty miles within the last four and twenty hours; and made such despatch in crossing, that his last troops had landed on the Virginia shore by the time the astonished enemy arrived on the opposite bank. Nothing, according to their own avowal, could surpass the grief and vexation of the British at discovering, on their arrival at Boyd's Ferry, "that all their toils and exertions had been vain, and that all their hopes were frustrated."*

* *Annual Register*, 1781.

CHAPTER XX.

CORNWALLIS TAKES POST AT HILLSBOROUGH.—HIS PROCLAMATION.—GREENE RECROSSES THE DAN.—COUNTRY SCOURED BY LEE AND PICKENS.—AFFAIR WITH COLONEL PYLE.—MANŒUVRES OF CORNWALLIS TO BRING GREENE TO ACTION. — BATTLE OF GUILFORD COURT-HOUSE. — GREENE RETREATS TO TROUBLESOME CREEK. — CORNWALLIS MARCHES TOWARD CAPE FEAR. — GREENE PURSUES HIM. — IS BROUGHT TO A STAND AT DEEP RIVER. — DETERMINES TO FACE ABOUT AND CARRY THE WAR INTO SOUTH CAROLINA.— CORNWALLIS MARCHES FOR VIRGINIA.

FOR a day the two armies lay panting within sight of each other on the opposite banks of the river, which had put an end to the race. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, dated the day of the crossing, Greene writes: "On the Dan River, almost fatigued to death, having had a retreat to conduct of upwards of two hundred miles, manœuvring constantly in the face of the enemy to give time for the militia to turn cut and get off our stores." And to Washington he writes (Feb. 15), "Lord Cornwallis has been at our heels from day to day ever since we left Guilford, and our movements from thence to this place have been of the most critical kind, having a river in our front and the enemy in our rear. The miserable condition of the

troops for clothing has rendered the march the most painful imaginable, many hundred of the soldiers tracking the ground with their bloody feet. Your feelings for the sufferings of the soldier, had you been with us, would have been severely tried." He concludes by an honorable testimonial in their favor: "Our army are in good spirits, notwithstanding their sufferings and excessive fatigue."

On the 16th, the river began to subside: the enemy might soon be able to cross. Greene prepared for a further retreat by sending forward his baggage on the road to Halifax, and securing the passage of the Staunton. At Halifax he was resolved to make a stand, rather than suffer the enemy to take possession of it without a struggle. Its situation on the Roanoke would make it a strong position for their army, supported by a fleet, and would favor their designs both on Virginia and the Carolinas. With a view to its defense, intrenchments had already been thrown up, under the direction of Kosciuszko.

Lord Cornwallis, however, did not deem it prudent, under present circumstances, to venture into Virginia, where Greene would be sure of powerful reinforcements. North Carolina was in a state of the utmost disorder and confusion; he thought it better to remain in it for a time, and profit by having compelled Greene to abandon it. After giving his troops a day's repose, therefore, he put them once more in motion on the 18th, along the road by which he had pursued Greene. The latter, who

was incessantly on the alert, was informed of this retrograde move, by a preconcerted signal; the waving of a white handkerchief, under covert of the opposite bank, by a female patriot.

This changed the game. Lee, with his legion, strengthened by two veteran Maryland companies, and Pickens, with a corps of South Carolina militia, all light troops, were transported across the Dan in the boats, with orders to gain the front of Cornwallis, hover as near as safety would permit, cut off his intercourse with the disaffected parts of the country, and check the rising of the royalists. "If we can but delay him for a day or two," said Greene, "he must be ruined." Greene, in the meanwhile, remained with his main force on the northern bank of the Dan, waiting to ascertain his lordship's real designs, and ready to cross at a moment's warning.

The movements of Cornwallis, for a day or two, were of a dubious nature, designed to perplex his opponents; on the 20th, however, he took post at Hillsborough. Here he erected the royal standard, and issued a proclamation, stating that, whereas it had pleased Divine Providence to prosper the operations of His Majesty's arms in driving the rebel army out of the province, he invited all his loyal subjects to hasten to this standard with their arms and ten days' provisions, to assist in suppressing the remains of rebellion, and reëstablishing good order and constitutional government.

By another instrument, all who could raise indepen-

dent companies were called upon to give in their names at head-quarters, and a bounty in money and lands was promised to those who should enlist under them. The companies thus raised were to be formed into regiments.

These sounding appeals produced but little effect on the people of the surrounding districts. Many hundreds, says Tarleton, rode into the camp to talk over the proclamation, inquire the news of the day, and take a view of the king's troops. The generality seemed desirous of peace, but averse from any exertion to procure it. They acknowledged that the Continentals had been chased out of the province, but apprehended they would soon return. "Some of the most zealous," adds he, "promised to raise companies, and even regiments; but their followers and dependents were slow to enlist." Tarleton himself was forthwith detached with the cavalry and a small body of infantry, to a region of country lying between the Haw and Deep rivers, to bring on a considerable number of loyalists who were said to be assembling there.

Rumor, in the meantime, had magnified the effect of his lordship's proclamations. Word was brought to Greene, that the tories were flocking from all quarters to the royal standard. Seven companies, it was said, had been raised in a single day. At this time the reinforcements to the American camp had been little more than six hundred Virginia militia, under General Stevens. Greene saw that at this rate, if Cornwallis were allowed to remain undisturbed, he would soon have complete

command of North Carolina; he boldly determined, therefore, to recross the Dan at all hazards with the scanty force at his command, and give his lordship check. In this spirit he broke up his camp and crossed the river on the 23d.

In the meantime, Lee and Pickens, who were scouting the country about Hillsborough, received information of Tarleton's recruiting expedition to the region between the Haw and Deep Rivers. There was no foe they were more eager to cope with; and they resolved to give him a surprise. Having forded the Haw one day about noon, they learnt from a countryman that Tarleton was encamped about three miles off, that his horses were unsaddled, and that everything indicated confident security. They now pushed on under covert of the woods, prepared to give the bold partisan a blow after his own fashion. Before they reached the place Tarleton had marched on; they captured two of his staff, however, who had remained behind, settling with the people of a farmhouse for supplies furnished to the detachment.

Being informed that Tarleton was to halt for the night at the distance of six miles, they still trusted to surprise him. On the way, however, they had an encounter with a body of three or four hundred mounted royalists, armed with rifles, and commanded by a Colonel Pyle, marching in quest of Tarleton. As Lee with his cavalry was in advance, he was mistaken for Tarleton, and hailed with loyal acclamations. He favored the mistake, and was

taking measures to capture the royalists, when some of them, seeing the infantry under Pickens, discovered their error and fired upon the rear-guard. The cavalry instantly charged upon them; ninety were cut down and slain, and a great number wounded; among the latter was Colonel Pyle himself, who took refuge among thickets on the borders of a piece of water which still bears his name. The Americans alleged in excuse for the slaughter, that it was provoked by their being attacked; and that the sabre was used, as a continued firing might alarm Tarleton's camp. We do not wonder, however, that British writers pronounced it a massacre; though it was but following the example set by Tarleton himself, in this ruthless campaign.

After all, Lee and Pickens missed the object of their enterprise. The approach of night and the fatigue of their troops, made them defer their attack upon Tarleton until morning. In the meantime, the latter had received an express from Cornwallis, informing him that Greene had passed the Dan, and ordering him to return to Hillsborough as soon as possible. He hastened to obey. Lee with his legion was in the saddle before daybreak; but Tarleton's troops were already on the march. "The legion," writes Lee, "accustomed to night expeditions, had been in the habit of using pine-torch for flambeau. Supplied with this, though the morning was dark, the enemy's trail was distinctly discovered, whenever a divergency took place in his route."

Before sunrise, however, Tarleton had forded the Haw, and "Light Horse Harry" gave over the pursuit, consoling himself that though he had not effected the chief object of his enterprise, a secondary one was completely executed, which would repress the tory spirit just beginning to burst forth. "Fortune," writes he in his magniloquent way, "Fortune, which sways so imperiously the affairs of war, demonstrated throughout the operation its supreme control.* Nothing was omitted on the part of the Americans, to give to the expedition the desired termination; but the very bright prospects which for a time presented themselves, were suddenly overcast;—the capricious goddess gave us Pyle and saved Tarleton."

The reappearance of Greene and his army in North Carolina, heralded by the scourings of Lee and Pickens, disconcerted the schemes of Lord Cornwallis. The recruiting service was interrupted. Many royalists who were on the way to his camp returned home. Forage and provisions became scarce in the neighborhood. He found himself, he said, "amongst timid friends and adjoining to inveterate rebels." On the 26th, therefore, he abandoned Hillsborough, threw himself across the Haw, and encamped near Alamance Creek, one of its principal tributaries, in a country favorable to supplies and with a tory population. His position was commanding, at the point of concurrence of roads from Salisbury, Guilford,

* Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, i. 319.

High Rockford, Cross Creek, and Hillsborough. It covered also the communication with Wilmington, where a dépôt of military stores, so important to his half-destitute army, had recently been established.

Greene, with his main army, took post about fifteen miles above him, on the heights between Troublesome Creek and Reedy Fork, one of the tributaries of the Haw. His plan was to cut the enemy off from the upper counties; to harass him by skirmishes, but to avoid a general battle; thus gaining time for the arrival of reinforcements daily expected. He rarely lay more than two days in a place, and kept his light troops under Pickens and Williams between him and the enemy; hovering about the latter; intercepting his intelligence; attacking his foraging parties, and striking at his flanks whenever exposed. Sharp skirmishes occurred between them and Tarleton's cavalry with various success. The country being much of a wilderness, obliged both parties to be on the alert; but the Americans, accustomed to bush-fighting, were not easily surprised.

On the 6th of March, Cornwallis, learning that the light troops under Williams were very carelessly posted, put his army suddenly in motion, and crossed the Alamance in a thick fog; with the design to beat up their quarters, drive them in upon the main army, and bring Greene to action should he come to their assistance. His movement was discovered by the American patrols, and the alarm given. Williams hastily called in his detachments, and

retreated with his light troops across Reedy Fork, while Lee with his legion manœuvred in front of the enemy. A stand was made by the Americans at Wetzell's Mill, but they were obliged to retire with the loss of fifty killed and wounded. Cornwallis did not pursue; evening was approaching, and he had failed in his main object; that of bringing Greene to action. The latter, fixed in his resolve of avoiding a conflict, had retreated across the Haw, in order to keep up his communication with the roads by which he expected his supplies and reinforcements. The militia of the country, who occasionally flocked to his camp, were chiefly volunteers, who fell off after every skirmish, "going home," as he said, "to tell the news." "At this time," said he on the 10th, "I have not above eight or nine hundred of them in the field; yet there have been upwards of five thousand in motion in the course of four weeks. A force fluctuating in this manner can promise but slender hopes of success against an enemy in high discipline, and made formidable by the superiority of their numbers. Hitherto, I have been obliged to effect that by finesse which I dare not attempt by force." *

Greene had scarcely written this letter when the long expected reinforcements arrived, having been hurried on by forced marches. They consisted of a brigade of Virginia militia, under General Lawson, two brigades of

* Letter to Governor Jefferson, March 10.

North Carolina militia under Generals Butler and Eaton, and four hundred regulars enlisted for eighteen months. His whole effective force, according to official returns, amounted to four thousand two hundred and forty-three foot, and one hundred and sixty-one cavalry. Of his infantry, not quite two thousand were regulars, and of these, three-fourths were new levies. His force nearly doubled in number that of Cornwallis, which did not exceed two thousand four hundred men; but many of Greene's troops were raw and inexperienced, and had never been in battle; those of the enemy were veterans schooled in warfare, and, as it were, welded together by campaigning in a foreign land, where their main safety consisted in standing by each other.

Greene knew the inferiority of his troops in this respect; his reinforcements, too, fell far short of what he had been led to expect, yet he determined to accept the battle which had so long been offered. The corps of light troops, under Williams, which had rendered such efficient service, was now incorporated with the main body, and all detachments were ordered to assemble at Guilford, within eight miles of the enemy, where he encamped on the 14th, sending his wagons and heavy baggage to the Iron Works at Troublesome Creek, ten miles in his rear.

Cornwallis, from the difficulty of getting correct information, and from Greene's frequent change of position, had an exaggerated idea of the American force, rating it

as high as eight thousand men: still he trusted in his well-seasoned veterans, and determined to attack Greene in his encampment, now that he seemed disposed for a general action. To provide against the possibility of a retreat, he sent his carriages and baggage to Bell's Mills, on Deep River, and set out at daybreak on the 15th, for Guilford.

Within four miles of that place, near the New Garden meeting-house, Tarleton with the advanced guard of cavalry, infantry, and yagers, came upon the American advanced guard, composed of Lee's partisan legion, and some mountaineers and Virginia militia. Tarleton and Lee were well matched in military prowess, and the skirmish between them was severe. Lee's horses, being from Virginia and Pennsylvania, were superior in weight and strength to those of his opponent, which had been chiefly taken from plantations in South Carolina. The latter were borne down by a charge in close column; several of their riders were dismounted, and killed or taken prisoners. Tarleton, seeing that his weakly mounted men fought to a disadvantage, sounded a retreat; Lee endeavored to cut him off: a general conflict of the vanguards, horse and foot, ensued, when the appearance of the main body of the enemy obliged Lee, in his turn, to retire with precipitation.

During this time, Greene was preparing for action on a woody eminence, a little more than a mile south of Guilford Court-house. The neighboring country was

covered with forest, excepting some cultivated fields about the court-house, and along the Salisbury road, which passed through the centre of the place, from south to north.

Greene had drawn out his troops in three lines. The first, composed of North Carolina militia, volunteers and riflemen, under Generals Butler and Eaton, was posted behind a fence, with an open field in front, and woods on the flanks and in the rear. About three hundred yards behind this, was the second line, composed of Virginia militia, under Generals Stevens and Lawson, drawn up across the road, and covered by a wood. The third line, about four hundred yards in the rear of the second, was composed of Continental troops or regulars; those of Virginia under General Huger on the right, those of Maryland under Colonel Williams on the left. Colonel Washington with a body of dragoons, Kirkwood's Delaware infantry, and a battalion of Virginia militia, covered the right flank; Lee's legion, with the Virginia riflemen under Colonel Campbell, covered the left. Two six-pounders were in the road, in advance of the first line; two field-pieces with the rear line near the court-house, where General Greene took his station.

About noon the head of the British army was descried advancing spiritedly from the south along the Salisbury road, and defiling into the fields. A cannonade was opened from the two six-pounders, in front of the first American line. It was answered by the British artillery.

Neither produced much effect. The enemy now advanced coolly and steadily in three columns; the Hessians and Highlanders under General Leslie, on the right, the Royal Artillery and Guards in the centre, and Webster's brigade on the left. The North Carolinians, who formed the first line, waited until the enemy were within one hundred and fifty yards, when, agitated by their martial array and undaunted movement, they began to fall into confusion; some fired off their pieces without taking aim; others threw them down, and took to flight. A volley from the foe, a shout, and a charge of the bayonet, completed their discomfiture. Some fled to the woods, others fell back upon the Virginians, who formed the second line. General Stevens, who commanded the latter, ordered his men to open and let the fugitives pass, pretending that they had orders to retire. He had taken care, however, to post forty riflemen in the rear of his own line, with orders to fire upon any one who should leave his post. Under his spirited command and example, the Virginians kept their ground and fought bravely.

The action became much broken up and diversified by the extent of the ground. The thickness of the woods impeded the movements of the cavalry. The reserves on both sides were called up. The British bayonet again succeeded; the second line gave way, and General Stevens, who had kept the field for some time, after being wounded in the thigh by a musket-ball, ordered a retreat.

The enemy pressed with increasing ardor against the third line, composed of Continental troops, and supported by Colonel Washington's dragoons and Kirkwood's Delawares. Greene counted on these to retrieve the day. They were regulars; they were fresh, and in perfect order. He rode along the line, calling on them to stand firm, and give the enemy a warm reception.

The first Maryland regiment which was on the right wing, was attacked by Colonel Webster, with the British left. It stood the shock bravely, and being seconded by some Virginia troops, and Kirkwood's Delawares, drove Webster across a ravine. The second Maryland regiment was not so successful. Impetuously attacked by Colonel Stewart, with a battalion of the Guards, and a company of grenadiers, it faltered, gave way, and fled, abandoning two field-pieces, which were seized by the enemy. Stewart was pursuing, when the first regiment, which had driven Webster across the ravine, came to the rescue with fixed bayonets, while Colonel Washington spurred up with his cavalry. The fight now was fierce and bloody. Stewart was slain; the two field-pieces were retaken, and the enemy in their turn gave way and were pursued with slaughter; a destructive fire of grape-shot from the enemy's artillery checked the pursuit. Two regiments approached on the right and left; Webster recrossed the ravine and fell upon Kirkwood's Delawares. There was intrepid fighting in different parts of

the field; but Greene saw that the day was lost; there was no retrieving the effect produced by the first flight of the North Carolinians. Unwilling to risk the utter destruction of his army, he directed a retreat, which was made in good order, but they had to leave their artillery on the field, most of the horses having been killed. About three miles from the field of action he made a halt to collect stragglers, and then continued on to the place of rendezvous at Speedwell's Iron Works on Troublesome Creek.

The British were too much cut up and fatigued to follow up their victory. Two regiments with Tarleton's cavalry attempted a pursuit, but were called back. Efforts were made to collect the wounded of both armies, but they were dispersed over so wide a space, among woods and thickets, that night closed before the task was accomplished. It was a dismal night even to the victors; a night of unusual darkness, with torrents of rain. The army was destitute of tents; there were not sufficient houses in the vicinity to receive the wounded; provisions were scanty; many had tasted very little food for the last two days; comforts were out of the question. Nearly fifty of the wounded sank under their aggravated miseries, and expired before morning. The cries of the disabled and dying, who remained on the field of battle, during the night, exceeded all description. Such a complicated scene of horror and distress, adds the British writer, whose words we quote, it is hoped, for

the sake of humanity, rarely occurs, even in military life.*

The loss of the Americans in this hard-fought affair was never fully ascertained. Their official returns, made immediately after the action, give little more than four hundred killed and wounded, and between eight and nine hundred missing; but Lord Cornwallis states in his despatches, that between two and three hundred of the Americans were found dead on the field of battle.

The loss sustained by his lordship, even if numerically less, was far more fatal; for, in the circumstances in which he was placed, it was not to be supplied, and it completely maimed him. Of his small army, ninety-three had fallen, four hundred and thirteen were wounded, and twenty-six missing. Among the killed and wounded were several officers of note. Thus, one-fourth of his army was either killed or disabled; his troops were exhausted by fatigue and hunger; his camp was encumbered by the wounded. His victory, in fact, was almost as ruinous as a defeat.

Greene lay for two days within ten miles of him, near the Iron Works on Troublesome Creek, gathering up his scattered troops. He had imbibed the spirit of Washington, and remained undismayed by hardships or reverses. Writing to the latter, he says: "Lord Cornwallis will not give up this country, without being soundly beaten. I

* Stedman, vol. ii p. 346.

wish our force was more competent to the business. But I am in hopes, by little and little, to reduce him in time. His troops are good, well found, and fight with great obstinacy.

"Virginia," adds he, "has given me every support I could wish or expect, since Lord Cornwallis has been in North Carolina; and nothing has contributed more to this, than the prejudice of the people in favor of your Excellency, which has extended to me from the friendship you have been pleased to honor me with." *

And again: "The service here is extremely severe, and the officers and soldiers bear it with a degree of patience that does them the highest honor. I have never taken off my clothes since I left the Pedee. I was taken with a fainting last night, owing, I suppose, to excessive fatigue and constant watching. I am better to-day, but far from well.—I have little prospect of acquiring much reputation while I labor under so many disadvantages. I hope my friends will make full allowances; and as for vulgar opinion, I regard it not."

In Washington he had a friend whose approbation was dearer to him than the applause of thousands, and who knew how to appreciate him. To Greene's account of the battle he sent a cheering reply. "Although the honors of the field do not fall to your lot, I am convinced you deserve them. The chances of war are various, and the

* Sparks. *Correspondence of the Revolution*, iii. 267.

best concerted measures and most flattering prospects may, and often do deceive us, especially while we are in the power of the militia. The motives which induced you to risk an action with Lord Cornwallis are supported upon the best military principle, and the consequence, if you can prevent the dissipation of your troops, will no doubt be fortunate."

The consequence, it will be found, was such as Washington, with his usual sagacity, predicted. Cornwallis, so far from being able to advance in the career of victory, could not even hold the ground he had so bravely won, but was obliged to retreat from the scene of triumph, to some secure position where he might obtain supplies for his famished army.

Leaving, therefore, about seventy of his officers and men, who were too severely wounded to bear travelling, together with a number of wounded Americans, in the New Garden meeting-house, and the adjacent buildings, under the protection of a flag of truce, and placing the rest of his wounded in wagons or on horseback, he set out, on the third day after the action, by easy marches for Cross Creek, otherwise called the Haw, an eastern branch of Cape Fear River, where was a settlement of Scottish Highlanders, stout adherents, as he was led to believe, to the royal cause. Here he expected to be plentifully supplied with provisions, and to have his sick and wounded well taken care of. Hence, too, he could open a communication by Cape Fear River, with Wilmington,

and obtain from the dépôt recently established there, such supplies as the country about Cross Creek did not afford.

On the day on which he began his march, he issued a proclamation, setting forth his victory, calling upon all loyal subjects to join his standard, and holding out the usual promises and threats to such as should obey or should continue in rebellion.

No sooner did Greene learn that Cornwallis was retreating, than he set out to follow him, determined to bring him again to action; and presenting the singular spectacle of the vanquished pursuing the victor. His troops, however, suffered greatly in this pursuit, from wintry weather, deep, wet, clayey roads, and scarcity of provisions; the country through which they marched being completely exhausted; but they harassed the enemy's rear-guard with frequent skirmishes.

On the 28th, Greene arrived at Ramsey's Mills, on Deep River, hard on the traces of Cornwallis, who had left the place a few hours previously, with such precipitation, that several of his wounded, who had died while on the march, were left behind unburied. Several fresh quarters of beef had likewise been forgotten, and were seized upon with eagerness by the hungry soldiery. Such had been the urgency of the pursuit this day, that many of the American troops sank upon the road, exhausted with fatigue.

At Deep River, Greene was brought to a stand. Corn-

wallis had broken down the bridge by which he had crossed; and further pursuit for the present was impossible. The constancy of the militia now gave way. They had been continually on the march, with little to eat, less to drink, and obliged to sleep in the woods in the midst of smoke. Every step had led them from their homes and increased their privations. They were now in want of everything, for the retreating enemy left a famished country behind him. The term for which most of them had enlisted was expired, and they now demanded their discharge. The demand was just and reasonable, and, after striving in vain to shake their determination, Greene felt compelled to comply with it. His force thus reduced, it would be impossible to pursue the enemy further. The halt he was obliged to make to collect provisions and rebuild the bridge, would give them such a start as to leave no hope of overtaking them should they continue their retreat; nor could he fight them upon equal terms should they make a stand. The regular troops would be late in the field, if raised at all: Virginia, from the unequal operation of the law for drafting, was not likely to furnish many soldiers: Maryland, as late as the 13th instant, had not got a man; neither was there the least prospect of raising a man in North Carolina. In this situation, remote from reinforcements, inferior to the enemy in numbers, and without hope of support, what was to be done? "If the enemy falls down toward Wilmington," said he, "they will be in a position

where it would be impossible for us to injure them if we had a force." * Suddenly he determined to change his course, and carry the war into South Carolina. This would oblige the enemy either to follow him, and thus abandon North Carolina; or to sacrifice all his posts in the upper part of North Carolina and Georgia. To Washington, to whom he considered himself accountable for all his policy, and from whose counsel he derived confidence and strength, he writes on the present occasion. "All things considered, I think the movement is warranted by the soundest reasons, both political and military. The manœuvre will be critical and dangerous, and the troops exposed to every hardship. But as I share it with them, I may hope they will bear up under it with that magnanimity which has always supported them, and for which they deserve everything of their country."—"I shall take every measure," adds he, "to avoid a misfortune. But necessity obliges me to commit myself to chance, and, I trust, my friends will do justice to my reputation, if any accident attends me."

In this brave spirit he apprised Sumter, Pickens, and Marion, by letter, of his intentions, and called upon them to be ready to coöperate with all the militia they could collect; promising to send forward cavalry and small detachments of light infantry, to aid them in capturing outposts before the army should arrive.

* Greene to Washington. *Cor. Rev.*, iii. 278.

To Lafayette he writes at the same time: "I expect by this movement to draw Cornwallis out of this State, *and prevent him from forming a junction with Arnold.* If you follow to support me, it is not impossible that we may give him a drubbing, especially if General Wayne comes up with the Pennsylvanians."

In pursuance of his plan, Greene, on the 30th of March, discharged all his militia with many thanks for the courage and fortitude with which they had followed him through so many scenes of peril and hardship; and joyously did the poor fellows set out for their homes. Then, after giving his "little, distressed, though successful army," a short taste of the repose they needed, and having collected a few days' provision, he set forward on the 5th of April toward Camden, where Lord Rawdon had his head-quarters.

Cornwallis, in the meantime, was grievously disappointed in the hopes he had formed of obtaining ample provisions and forage at Cross Creek, and strong reinforcements from the royalists in that neighborhood. Neither could he open a communication by Cape Fear River, for the conveyance of his troops to Wilmington. The distance by water was upwards of a hundred miles, the breadth of the river seldom above one hundred yards, the banks high, and the inhabitants on each side generally hostile. He was compelled, therefore, to continue his retreat by land, quite to Wilmington, where he arrived on the 7th of April, and his troops, weary, sick, and

wounded, rested for the present from the "unceasing toils and unspeakable hardships, which they had undergone during the past three months."*

It was his lordship's intention, as soon as he should have equipped his own corps and received a part of the expected reinforcements from Ireland, to return to the upper country, in hopes of giving protection to the royal interests in South Carolina, and of preserving the health of his troops until he should concert new measures with Sir Henry Clinton.† His plans were all disconcerted, however, by intelligence of Greene's rapid march toward Camden. Never, we are told, was his lordship more affected than by this news. "My situation here is very distressing," writes he. "Greene took the advantage of my being obliged to come to this place, and has marched to South Carolina. My expresses to Lord Rawdon on my leaving Cross Creek, warning him of the possibility of such a movement, have all failed; mountaineers and militia have poured into the back part of that province, and I much fear that Lord Rawdon's posts will be so distant from each other, and his troops so scattered, as to put him into the greatest danger of being beaten in detail, and that the worst of consequences may happen to most of the troops out of Charleston."‡

* See Letter of Cornwallis to Lord G. Germain, April 18. Also *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 72.

† *Answer to Clinton Narrative*, Introduction, p. vi.

‡ Letter to Major-general Phillips.

It was too late for his lordship to render any aid by a direct move towards Camden. Before he could arrive there, Greene would have made an attack; if successful, his lordship's army might be hemmed in among the great rivers, in an exhausted country, revolutionary in its spirit, where Greene might cut off their subsistence, and render their arms useless.

All thoughts of offensive operations against North Carolina were at an end. Sickness, desertion, and the loss sustained at Guilford Court-house, had reduced his little army to fourteen hundred and thirty-five men.

In this sad predicament, after remaining several days in a painful state of irresolution, he determined to take advantage of Greene's having left the back part of Virginia open, to march directly into that province, and attempt a junction with the force acting there under General Phillips.

By this move, he might draw Greene back to the northward, and by the reduction of Virginia, he might promote the subjugation of the South. The move, however, he felt to be perilous. His troops were worn down by upwards of eight hundred miles of marching and counter-marching, through an inhospitable and impracticable country; they had now three hundred more before them, under still worse circumstances than those in which they first set out; for so destitute were they, notwithstanding the supplies received at Wilmington, that his lordship, sadly humorous, declared "his cavalry

wanted everything, and his infantry, everything but shoes." *

There was no time for hesitation or delay; Greene might return and render the junction with Phillips impracticable: having sent an express to the latter, therefore, informing him of his coming, and appointing a meeting at Petersburg, his lordship set off on the 25th of April, on his fated march into Virginia.

We must now step back in dates to bring up events in the more northern parts of the Union.

* *Annual Register*, 1781, p. 90.

CHAPTER XXI.

ARNOLD AT PORTSMOUTH IN VIRGINIA.—EXPEDITION SENT AGAINST HIM.—INSTRUCTIONS TO LAFAYETTE.—WASHINGTON AT NEWPORT.—CONSULTATIONS WITH DE ROCHAMBEAU.—SAILING OF THE FRENCH FLEET.—PURSUED BY THE ENGLISH.—EXPEDITION OF LAFAYETTE TO VIRGINIA.—ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH FLEETS.—FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION AGAINST ARNOLD.—LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO COLONEL LAURENS.—MEASURES TO REINFORCE GREENE.—GENERAL PHILLIPS IN COMMAND AT PORTSMOUTH.—MARAUDS THE COUNTRY.—CHECKED BY LAFAYETTE.—MOUNT VERNON MENACED.—DEATH OF PHILLIPS.

IN a former chapter we left Benedict Arnold fortifying himself at Portsmouth, after his ravaging incursion. At the solicitation of Governor Jefferson, backed by Congress, the Chevalier de la Luzerne had requested the French commander at the eastward to send a ship of the line and some frigates to Chesapeake Bay to oppose the traitor. Fortunately, at this juncture a severe snow-storm (Jan. 22d) scattered Arbuthnot's blockading squadron, wrecking one ship of the line and dismasting others, and enabled the French fleet at Newport to look abroad; and Rochambeau wrote to Washington that the Chevalier Destouches, who commanded the fleet, proposed to send three or four ships to the Chesapeake.

Washington feared the position of Arnold, and his well-known address, might enable him to withstand a mere attack by sea; anxious to insure his capture, he advised that Destouches should send his whole fleet; and that De Rochambeau should embark about a thousand men on board of it, with artillery and apparatus for a siege; engaging, on his own part, to send off immediately a detachment of twelve hundred men to coöperate. "The destruction of the corps under the command of Arnold," writes he, "is of such immense importance to the welfare of the Southern States, that I have resolved to attempt it with the detachment I now send in conjunction with the militia, even if it should not be convenient for your Excellency to detach a part of your force; provided M. Destouches is able to protect our operations by such a disposition of his fleet as will give us the command of the bay, and prevent succors from being sent from New York."

Before the receipt of this letter, the French commanders, acting on their first impulse, had, about the 9th of February, detached M. de Tilly, with a sixty-gun ship and two frigates, to make a dash into the Chesapeake. Washington was apprised of their sailing just as he was preparing to send off the twelve hundred men spoken of in his letter to De Rochambeau. He gave the command of this detachment to Lafayette, instructing him to act in conjunction with the militia and the ships sent by Destouches, against the enemy's corps actually in Virginia.

As the case was urgent, he was to suffer no delay, when on the march, for want either of provisions, forage, or wagons, but where ordinary means did not suffice, he was to resort to military impress. "You are to do no act whatever with Arnold," said the letter of instruction, "that directly or by implication may screen him from the punishment due to his treason and desertion, which, if he should fall into your hands, you will execute in the most summary manner."

Washington wrote at the same time to the Baron Steuben, informing him of the arrangements, and requesting him to be on the alert. "If the fleet should have arrived before this gets to hand," said he, "secrecy will be out of the question; if not, you will conceal your expectations, and only seem to be preparing for defense. Arnold, on the appearance of the fleet, may endeavor to retreat through North Carolina. If you take any measure to obviate this, the precaution will be advisable. Should you be able to capture this detachment with its chief, it will be an event as pleasing as it will be useful."

Lafayette set out on his march on the 22d of February, and Washington was indulging the hope that, scanty as was the naval force sent to the Chesapeake, the combined enterprise might be successful, when on the 27th, he received a letter from the Count de Rochambeau announcing its failure. De Tilly had made his dash into Chesapeake Bay, but Arnold had been apprised by the

British Admiral Arbuthnot of his approach, and had drawn his ships high up Elizabeth River. The water was too shallow for the largest French ships to get within four leagues of him. One of De Tilly's frigates ran aground, and was got off with difficulty, and that commander, seeing that Arnold was out of his reach, and fearing to be himself blockaded should he linger, put to sea and returned to Newport; having captured during his cruise a British frigate of forty-four guns, and two privateers with their prizes.

The French commanders now determined to follow the plan suggested by Washington, and operate in the Chesapeake with their whole fleet and a detachment of land troops, being, as they said, disposed to risk everything to hinder Arnold from establishing himself at Portsmouth.

Washington set out for Newport to concert operations with the French commanders. Before his departure, he wrote to Lafayette, on the 1st of March, giving him intelligence of these intentions, and desiring him to transmit it to the Baron Steuben. "I have received a letter," adds he, "from General Greene, by which it appears that Cornwallis, with twenty-five hundred men, was penetrating the country with great rapidity, and Greene with a much inferior force retiring before him, having determined to pass the Roanoke. This intelligence and an apprehension that Arnold may make his escape before the fleet can arrive in the bay, induces me to give you

greater latitude than you had in your original instructions. You are at liberty to concert a plan with the French general and naval commander for a descent into North Carolina, to cut off the detachment of the enemy which had ascended Cape Fear River, intercept if possible Cornwallis, and relieve General Greene and the Southern States. This, however, ought to be a secondary object, attempted in case of Arnold's retreat to New York; or in case his reduction should be attended with too much delay. There should be strong reasons to induce a change of our first plan against Arnold if he is still in Virginia."

Washington arrived at Newport on the 6th of March, and found the French fleet ready for sea, the troops, eleven hundred strong, commanded by General the Baron de Viomenil, being already embarked.

Washington went immediately on board of the admiral's ship, where he had an interview with the Count de Rochambeau, and arranged the plan of the campaign. Returning on shore he was received by the inhabitants with enthusiastic demonstrations of affection; and was gratified to perceive the harmony and good will between them and the French army and fleet. Much of this he attributed to the wisdom of the commanders, and the discipline of the troops, but more to magnanimity on the one part, and gratitude on the other; and he hailed it as a happy presage of lasting friendship between the two nations.

On the 8th of March, at ten o'clock at night, he writes

to Lafayette: "I have the pleasure to inform you that the whole fleet went out with a fair wind this evening about sunset. We have not heard of any move of the British in Gardiner's Bay. Should we luckily meet with no interruption from them, and Arnold should continue in Virginia, until the arrival of M. Destouches, I flatter myself you will meet with that success which I most ardently wish, not only on the public, but your own account."

The British fleet made sail in pursuit, on the morning of the 10th; as the French had so much the start, it was hoped they would reach Chesapeake Bay before them. Washington felt the present to be a most important moment. "The success of the expedition now in agitation," said he, "seems to depend upon a naval superiority, and the force of the two fleets is so equal, that we must rather hope for, than entertain an assurance of victory. The attempt, however, made by our allies to dislodge the enemy, in Virginia, is a bold one, and should it fail, will nevertheless entitle them to the thanks of the public."

On returning to his head-quarters at New Windsor, Washington on the 20th of March found letters from General Greene, informing him that he had saved all his baggage, artillery, and stores, notwithstanding the hot pursuit of the enemy, and was now in his turn following them, but that he was greatly in need of reinforcements.

"My regard for the public good, and my inclination to promote your success," writes Washington in reply, "will

prompt me to give every assistance, and to make every diversion in your favor. But what can I do if I am not furnished with the means? From what I saw and learned while at the eastward, I am convinced the levies will be late in the field, and I fear far short of the requisition. I most anxiously wait the event of the present operation in Virginia. If attended with success, it may have the happiest influence on our Southern affairs, by leaving the forces of Virginia free to act. For while there is an enemy in the heart of a country, you can expect neither men nor supplies from it, in that full and regular manner in which they ought to be given."

In the meantime Lafayette with his detachment was pressing forward by forced marches for Virginia. Arriving at the Head of Elk on the 3d of March, he halted until he should receive tidings respecting the French fleet. A letter from the Baron Steuben spoke of the preparations he was making, and the facility of taking the fortifications at Portsmouth, "sword in hand." The youthful marquis was not so sanguine as the veteran baron. "Arnold," said he, "has had so much time to prepare, and plays so deep a game; nature has made the position so respectable, and some of the troops under his orders have been in so many actions, that I do not flatter myself to succeed so easily." On the 7th he received Washington's letter of the 1st, apprising him of the approaching departure of the whole fleet with land forces. Lafayette now conducted his troops by water to An-

napolis, and concluding, from the time the ships were to sail, and the winds which had since prevailed, the French fleet must be already in the Chesapeake, he crossed the bay in an open boat to Virginia, and pushed on to confer with the American and French commanders, get a convoy for his troops, and concert matters for a vigorous co-operation. Arriving at York on the 14th, he found the Baron Steuben in the bustle of military preparations, and confident of having five thousand militia ready to coöperate. These, with Lafayette's detachment, would be sufficient for the attack by land: nothing was wanting but a coöperation by sea; and the French fleet had not yet appeared, though double the time necessary for the voyage had elapsed. The marquis repaired to General Muhlenburg's camp near Suffolk, and reconnoitered with him the enemy's works at Portsmouth; this brought on a trifling skirmish, but everything appeared satisfactory; everything promised complete success.

On the 20th, word was brought that a fleet had come to anchor within the capes. It was supposed of course to be the French, and now the capture of the traitor was certain. He himself, from certain signs appeared to be in great confusion: none of his ships ventured down the bay. An officer of the French navy bore down to visit the fleet, but returned with the astounding intelligence that it was British!

Admiral Arbuthnot had in fact overtaken Destouches on the 16th of March, off the capes of Virginia. Their

forces were nearly equal; eight ships of the line, and four frigates on each side, the French having more men, the English more guns. An engagement took place which lasted about an hour. The British van at first took the brunt of the action, and was severely handled; the centre came up to its relief. The French line was broken and gave way, but rallied, and formed again at some distance. The crippled state of some of his ships prevented the British admiral from bringing on a second encounter; nor did the French seek one, but shaped their course the next day back to Newport. Both sides claimed a victory. The British certainly effected the main objects they had in view; the French were cut off from the Chesapeake; the combined enterprise against Portsmouth was disconcerted, and Arnold was saved. Great must have been the apprehensions of the traitor, while that enterprise threatened to entrap him. He knew the peculiar peril impending over him; it had been announced in the sturdy reply of an American prisoner, to his inquiry what his countrymen would do to him if he were captured. "They would cut off the leg wounded in the service of your country and bury it with the honors of war; the rest of you they would hang!"

The feelings of Washington, on hearing of the result of the enterprise, may be judged from the following passage of a letter to Colonel John Laurens, then minister at Paris. "The failure of this expedition, which was most flattering in the commencement, is much to be regretted;

because a successful blow in that quarter would, in all probability, have given a decisive turn to our affairs in all the Southern States; because it has been attended with considerable expense on our part, and much inconvenience to the State of Virginia, by the assembling of our militia; because the world is disappointed at not seeing Arnold in gibbets; and above all, because we stood in need of something to keep us afloat till the result of your mission is known; for be assured, my dear Laurens, day does not follow night more certainly, than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war, without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion, that, without a foreign loan, our present force, which is but the remnant of an army, cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased, and in readiness for another. . . . . If France delays a timely and powerful aid in the critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the balance; not from choice, but from hard and absolute necessity; and you may rely on it as a fact, that we cannot transport the provisions from the States in which they are assessed, to the army, because we cannot pay the teamsters, who will no longer work for certificates. . . . . In a word, we are at the end of our tether, and

now or never our deliverance must come. . . . . How easy would it be to retort the enemy's own game upon them; if it could be made to comport with the general plan of the war, to keep a superior fleet always in these seas, and France would put us in condition to be active, by advancing us money. The ruin of the enemy's schemes would then be certain; the bold game they are now playing would be the means of effecting it; for they would be reduced to the necessity of concentrating their force at capital points; thereby giving up all the advantages they have gained in the Southern States, or be vulnerable everywhere."

Washington's anxiety was now awakened for the safety of General Greene. Two thousand troops had sailed from New York under General Phillips, probably to join with the force under Arnold, and proceed to reinforce Cornwallis. Should they form a junction, Greene would be unable to withstand them. With these considerations Washington wrote to Lafayette, urging him, since he was already three hundred miles, which was half the distance, on the way, to push on with all possible speed to join the Southern army, sending expresses ahead to inform Greene of his approach.

The letter found Lafayette on the 8th of April, at the Head of Elk, preparing to march back with his troops to the banks of the Hudson. On his return through Virginia, he had gone out of his way, and travelled all night for the purpose of seeing Washington's mother at Fred-

ericksburg, and paying a visit to Mount Vernon. He now stood ready to obey Washington's orders, and march to reinforce General Greene; but his troops, who were chiefly from the Eastern States, murmured at the prospect of a campaign in a southern climate, and desertions began to occur. Upon this he announced in general orders, that he was about to enter on an enterprise of great difficulty and danger, in which he trusted his soldiers would not abandon him. Any, however, who were unwilling, should receive permits to return home.

As he had anticipated, their pride was roused by this appeal. All engaged to continue forward. So great was the fear of appearing a laggard, or a craven, that a sergeant, too lame to march, hired a place in a cart to keep up with the army. In the zeal of the moment, Lafayette borrowed money on his own credit from the Baltimore merchants, to purchase summer clothing for his troops, in which he was aided, too, by the ladies of the city, with whom he was deservedly popular.

The detachment from New York, under General Phillips, arrived at Portsmouth on the 26th of March. That officer immediately took command, greatly to the satisfaction of the British officers, who had been acting under Arnold. The force now collected there amounted to three thousand five hundred men. The garrison of New York had been greatly weakened in furnishing this detachment, but Cornwallis had urged the policy of transferring the seat of war to Virginia, even at the expense of

abandoning New York; declaring that until that State was subdued, the British hold upon the Carolinas must be difficult, if not precarious.

The disparity in force was now so great, that the Baron Steuben had to withdraw his troops, and remove the military stores into the interior. Many of the militia, too, their term of three months being expired, stacked their arms and set off for their homes, and most of the residue had to be discharged.

General Phillips had hitherto remained quiet in Portsmouth, completing the fortifications, but evidently making preparations for an expedition. On the 16th of April, he left one thousand men in garrison, and, embarking the rest in small vessels of light draught, proceeded up James River, destroying armed vessels, public magazines, and a ship-yard belonging to the State.

Landing at City Point, he advanced against Petersburg, a place of deposit of military stores and tobacco. He was met about a mile below the town by about one thousand militia, under General Muhlenburg, who, after disputing the ground inch by inch for nearly two hours, with considerable loss on both sides, retreated across the Appomattox, breaking down the bridge behind them.

Phillips entered the town, set fire to the tobacco warehouses, and destroyed all the vessels lying in the river. Repairing and crossing the bridge over the Appomattox, he proceeded to Chesterfield Court-house, where he destroyed barracks and public stores; while Arnold, with a

detachment, laid waste the magazines of tobacco in the direction of Warwick. A fire was opened by the latter from a few field-pieces on the river bank, upon a squadron of small armed vessels, which had been intended to coöperate with the French fleet against Portsmouth. The crews scuttled or set fire to them, and escaped to the north side of the river.

This destructive course was pursued until they arrived at Manchester, a small place opposite Richmond, where the tobacco warehouses were immediately in a blaze. Richmond was a leading object of this desolating enterprise, for there a great part of the military stores of the State had been collected. Fortunately, Lafayette, with his detachment of two thousand men, had arrived there by forced marches, the evening before, and being joined by about two thousand militia and sixty dragoons (the latter principally young Virginians of family), had posted himself strongly on the high banks on the north side of the river.

There being no bridge across the river at that time, General Phillips did not think it prudent to attempt a passage in face of such a force so posted; but was extremely irritated at being thus foiled by the celerity of his youthful opponent, who now assumed the chief command of the American forces in Virginia.

Returning down the south bank of the river, to the place where his vessels awaited him, General Phillips reëmbarked on the 2d of May, and dropped slowly down

the river below the confluence of the Chickahominy. He was followed cautiously, and his movements watched by Lafayette, who posted himself behind the last-named river.

Despatches from Cornwallis now informed Phillips that his lordship was advancing with all speed from the South to effect a junction with him. The general immediately made a rapid move to regain possession of Petersburg, where the junction was to take place. Lafayette attempted by forced marches to get there before him, but was too late. Falling back, therefore, he recrossed James River and stationed himself some miles below Richmond, to be at hand for the protection of the public stores collected there.

During this main expedition of Phillips, some of his smaller vessels had carried on the plan of plunder and devastation in other of the rivers emptying into the Chesapeake Bay; setting fire to the houses where they met with resistance. One had ascended the Potomac and menaced Mount Vernon. Lund Washington, who had charge of the estate, met the flag which the enemy sent on shore, and saved the property from ravage, by furnishing the vessel with provisions. Lafayette, who heard of the circumstance, and was sensitive for the honor of Washington, immediately wrote to him on the subject. "This conduct of the person who represents you on your estate," writes he, "must certainly produce a bad effect, and contrast with the courageous replies of some of

your neighbors, whose houses in consequence have been burnt. You will do what you think proper, my dear general, but friendship makes it my duty to give you confidentially the facts."

Washington, however, had previously received a letter from Lund himself, stating all the circumstances of the case, and had immediately written him a reply. He had no doubt that Lund had acted from his best judgment, and with a view to preserve the property and buildings from impending danger, but he was stung to the quick by the idea that his agent should go on board of the enemy's vessel, carry them refreshments, and "commune with a parcel of plundering scoundrels," as he termed them. "It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard," writes he, "that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid my plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

In concluding his letter, he expresses his opinion that it was the intention of the enemy to prosecute the plundering plan they had begun; and that it would end in the destruction of his property, but adds, that he is "prepared for the event." He advises his agent to deposit the valuable and least bulky articles in a place of

safety. "Such and so many things as are necessary for common and present use must be retained, and must run their chance through the fiery trial of this summer."

Such were the steadfast purposes of Washington's mind when war was brought home to his door, and threatening his earthly paradise of Mount Vernon.

In the meantime the desolating career of General Phillips was brought to a close. He had been ill for some days previous to his arrival at Petersburg, and by the time he reached there, was no longer capable of giving orders. He died four days afterwards, honored and deeply regretted by his brothers in arms, as a meritorious and well-tried soldier. What made his death to be more sensibly felt by them at this moment, was, that it put the traitor, Arnold, once more in the general command.

He held it, however, but for a short time, as Lord Cornwallis arrived at Petersburg on the 20th of May, after nearly a month's weary marching from Wilmington. His lordship, on taking command, found his force augmented by a considerable detachment of Royal Artillery, two battalions of light infantry, the 76th and 80th British regiments, a Hessian regiment, Lieutenant-colonel Simcoe's corps of Queen's rangers, cavalry and infantry, one hundred yagers, Arnold's legion of royalists, and the garrison of Portsmouth. He was cheered also by intelligence that Lord Rawdon had obtained an advantage over General Greene before Camden, and

that three British regiments had sailed from Cork for Charleston. His mind, we are told, was now set at ease with regard to Southern affairs; his spirits, so long jaded by his harassing tramps about the Carolinas, were again lifted up by his augmented strength, and Tarleton assures us, that his lordship indulged in "brilliant hopes of a glorious campaign in those parts of America where he commanded." * How far these hopes were realized, we shall show in a future page.

* Tarleton. *History of the Campaign*, p. 291.

CHAPTER XXII.

INEFFICIENT STATE OF THE ARMY.—MARAUD OF DELANCEY.—DEATH OF COLONEL GREENE.—ARRIVAL OF THE COUNT DE BARRAS.—FRENCH NAVAL FORCE EXPECTED.—INTERVIEW OF WASHINGTON AND DE ROCHAMBEAU AT WEATHERSFIELD.—PLAN OF COMBINED OPERATIONS.—FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT OF ROBERT MORRIS.—SCHEME TO ATTACK THE WORKS ON NEW YORK ISLAND AND CAPTURE DELANCEY'S CORPS.—ENCAMPMENTS OF AMERICAN AND FRENCH ARMIES IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY.—RECONNOITERING EXPEDITIONS.

HILE affairs were approaching a crisis in Virginia, troubles were threatening from the North. There were rumors of invasion from Canada; of war councils and leagues among the savage tribes; of a revival of the territorial feuds between New York and Vermont. Such, however, was the deplorable inefficiency of the military system, that though, according to the resolves of Congress, there were to have been thirty-seven thousand men under arms at the beginning of the year, Washington's whole force on the Hudson in the month of May did not amount to seven thousand men, of whom little more than four thousand were effective.

He still had his head-quarters at New Windsor, just

above the Highlands, and within a few miles of West Point. Here he received intelligence that the enemy were in force on the opposite side of the Hudson, marauding the country on the north side of Croton River, and he ordered a hasty advance of Connecticut troops in that direction.

The Croton River flows from east to west across Westchester County, and formed, as it were, the barrier of the American lines. The advanced posts of Washington's army guarded it, and by its aid, protected the upper country from the incursions of those foraging parties and marauders which had desolated the neutral ground below it. The incursions most to be guarded against were those of Colonel Delancey's loyalists, a horde of tories and refugees which had their stronghold in Morrisania, and were the terror of the neighboring country. There was a petty war continually going on between them and the American outposts, often of a ruthless kind. Delancey's horse and Delancey's rangers scoured the country and swept off forage and cattle from its fertile valleys for the British army at New York. Hence they were sometimes stigmatized by the opprobrious appellation of Cow Boys.

The object of their present incursion was to surprise an outpost of the American army stationed near a fordable part of the Croton River not far from Pine's Bridge. The post was commanded by Colonel Christopher Greene, of Rhode Island, the same who had successfully defended Fort Mercer on the Delaware, when assailed by Count

Donop. He was a valuable officer, highly prized by Washington. The enterprise against his post was something like that against the post of Young's House; both had been checks to the foragers of this harassed region.

Colonel Delancey, who led this foray, was successor to the unfortunate André as adjutant-general of the British army. He conducted it secretly, and in the night, at the head of a hundred horse and two hundred foot. The Croton was forded at daybreak, just as the night-guard had been withdrawn, and the farm-houses were surprised and assailed in which the Americans were quartered. That occupied by Colonel Greene and a brother officer, Major Flagg, was first surrounded. The major started from his bed, and discharged his pistols from a window, but was shot through the head, and afterwards despatched by cuts and thrusts of the sabre.

The door of Greene's room was burst open. He defended himself vigorously and effectively with his sword, for he had great strength, but he was overpowered by numbers, cut down, and barbarously mangled. A massacre was going on in other quarters. Besides these two officers, there were between thirty and forty killed and wounded, and several made prisoners.

It is said that Colonel Delancey was not present at the carnage, but remained on the south side of the Croton to secure the retreat of his party. It may be so; but the present exploit was in the spirit of others by which he had contributed to harry this beautiful region, and made

it a "bloody ground." No foes so ruthless had the American patriots to encounter as their own tory countrymen in arms.

Before the troops ordered out by Washington arrived at the post, the marauders had made a precipitate retreat. They had attempted to carry off Greene a prisoner, but he died within three quarters of a mile of the house. His captors, as they passed by the farm-houses, told the inhabitants that, should there be any inquiry after the colonel, they had left him dead at the edge of the woods.*

Greene was but forty-four years of age at the time of his death, and was a model of manly strength and comeliness. A true soldier of the Revolution, he had served at Lexington and Bunker's Hill; followed Arnold through the Kennebec wilderness to Quebec; fought under the walls of that city; distinguished himself by his defense of Fort Mercer on the Delaware, and by his kind treatment of his vanquished and wounded antagonist, Colonel Donop. How different the treatment experienced by him at the hands of his tory countrymen!

The commander-in-chief, we are told, heard with anguish and indignation the tragical fate of this his faithful friend and soldier. On the subsequent day, the corpse of Colonel Greene was brought to head-quarters, and his funeral solemnized with military honors and universal grief.†

* Letter of Paymaster Hughes. See Bolton's *Westchester Co.*, vol. ii. p. 94.

† Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, vol. i. p. 457.

At this juncture, Washington's attention was called in another direction. A frigate had arrived at Boston, bringing the Count de Barras, to take command of the French naval force. He was a veteran about sixty years of age, and had commanded D'Estaing's vanguard, when he forced the entrance of Newport harbor. The count brought the cheering intelligence, that an armament of twenty ships of the line, with land forces, was to sail, or had sailed, from France, under the Count de Grasse for the West Indies, and that twelve of these ships were to relieve the squadron at Newport, and might be expected on the coast of the United States in July or August.

The Count de Rochambeau, having received despatches from the court of France, now requested an interview with Washington. The latter appointed Weathersfield in Connecticut for the purpose ; and met the count there on the 22d of May, hoping to settle a definitive plan of the campaign. Both as yet were ignorant of the arrival of Cornwallis in Virginia. The policy of a joint expedition to relieve the Carolinas was discussed. As the French ships in Newport were still blockaded by a superior force, such an expedition would have to be made by land. A march to the Southern States was long and harassing, and always attended with a great waste of life. Such would certainly be the case at present, when it would have to be made in the heat of summer. The difficulties and expenses of land transportation, also, presented a formidable objection.

On the other hand, an effective blow might be struck at New York, the garrison having been reduced one half by detachments to the South. That important post and its dependencies might be wrested from the enemy, or, if not, they might be obliged to recall a part of their force from the South for their own defense.

It was determined, therefore, that the French troops should march from Newport as soon as possible, and form a junction with the American army on the Hudson, and that both should move down to the vicinity of New York to make a combined attack, in which the Count de Grasse should be invited to coöperate with his fleet and a body of land troops.

A vessel was despatched by De Rochambeau, to inform the Count de Grasse of this arrangement; and letters were addressed by Washington to the executive authorities of New Jersey and the New England States, urging them to fill up their battalions and furnish their quotas of provisions. Notwithstanding all his exertions, however, when he mustered his forces at Peekskill, he was mortified to find not more than five thousand effective men. Notwithstanding, too, all the resolutions passed in the legislatures of the various States for supplying the army, it would, at this critical moment, have been destitute of provisions, especially bread, had it not been for the zeal, talents, and activity of Mr. Robert Morris, now a delegate to Congress from the State of Pennsylvania, and recently appointed Superintendent of Finance. This

patriotic and energetic man, when public means failed, pledged his own credit in transporting military stores and feeding the army. Throughout the Revolution Washington was continually baffled in the hopes caused by the resolutions of legislative bodies, too often as little alimentary as the east wind.

The Count de Rochambeau and the Duke de Lauzun being arrived with their troops in Connecticut, on their way to join the American army, Washington prepared for spirited operations; quickened by the intelligence that a part of the garrison of New York had been detached to forage the Jerseys. Two objects were contemplated by him: one, the surprisal of the British works at the north end of New York Island; the other, the capture or destruction of Delancey's corps of refugees in Morrisania. The attack upon the posts was to be conducted by General Lincoln, with a detachment from the main army, which he was to bring down by water—that on Delancey's corps by the Duke de Lauzun with his legion, aided by Sheldon's dragoons, and a body of Connecticut troops. Both operations were to be carried into effect on the 3d of July. The duke was to march down from Ridgebury in Connecticut, for the purpose. Everything was to be conducted with secrecy and by the way of surprisal. Should anything occur to prevent Lincoln from attempting the works on New York Island, he was to land his men above Spyt den Duivel Creek, march to the high grounds in front of King's Bridge, lie concealed

there until the duke's attack on Delancey's corps should be announced by firing or other means; then to dispose of his force in such manner as to make the enemy think it larger than it really was; thereby deterring troops from coming over the bridge to turn Lauzun's right, while he prevented the escape over the bridge of Delancey's refugees when routed from Morrisania.

Washington, at the same time, wrote a confidential letter to Governor Clinton, informing him of designs upon the enemy's posts. "Should we be happy enough to succeed," writes he, "and be able to hold our conquest, the advantages will be greater than can well be imagined. But I cannot flatter myself that the enemy will permit the latter, unless I am suddenly and considerably reinforced. I shall march down the remainder of this army, and I have hopes that the French force will be near at hand at the time. But I shall, notwithstanding, direct the alarm-guns and beacons to be fired in case of success; and I have to request, that your Excellency will, upon such signals, communicate the meaning of them to the militia, and put yourself at the head of them, and march with the utmost expedition to King's Bridge, bringing with you three or four days' provision at least."

It was a service which would have been exactly to the humor of George Clinton.

In pursuance of the plan, Lincoln left the camp near Peekskill on the 1st, with eight hundred men, and artillery, and proceeded to Teller's Point, where they were

embarked in boats with muffled oars, and rowed silently at night down the Tappan Sea, that region of mystery and secret enterprise. At daylight they kept concealed under the land. The Duke de Lauzun was supposed, at the same time, to be on the way from Connecticut. Washington, at three o'clock on the morning of the 2d, left his tents standing at Peekskill, and commenced his march with his main force, without baggage; making a brief halt at Croton Bridge, about nine miles from Peekskill, another at the Sleepy Hollow Church, near Tarrytown, where he halted until dusk, and completed the rest of his march in the night, to Valentine's Hill, four miles above King's Bridge, where he arrived about sunrise. There he posted himself to cover the detached troops, and improve any advantages that might be gained by them.

Lincoln, on the morning of the 2d, had left his flotilla concealed under the eastern shore, and crossed to Fort Lee to reconnoiter Fort Washington from the cliffs on the opposite side of the Hudson. To his surprise and chagrin, he discovered a British force encamped on the north end of New York Island, and a ship-of-war anchored in the river. In fact, the troops which had been detached into the Jerseys, had returned, and the enemy were on the alert; the surprisal of the forts, therefore, was out of the question.

Lincoln's thoughts now were to aid the Duke de Lauzun's part of the scheme, as he had been instructed. Before daylight of the 3d, he landed his troops above Spyt

den Duivel Creek, and took possession of the high ground on the north of Harlem River, where Fort Independence once stood. Here he was discovered by a foraging party of the enemy, fifteen hundred strong, who had sallied out at daybreak to scour the country. An irregular skirmish ensued. The firing was heard by the Duke de Lauzun, who was just arrived with his troops at East Chester, fatigued by a long and forced march in sultry weather. Finding the country alarmed, and all hope of surprising Delancey's corps at an end, he hastened to the support of Lincoln. Washington also advanced with his troops from Valentine's Hill. The British, perceiving their danger, retreated to their boats on the east side of Harlem River, and crossed over to New York Island. A trifling loss in killed and wounded had been sustained on each side, and Lincoln had made a few prisoners.

Being disappointed in both objects, Washington did not care to fatigue his troops any more, but suffered them to remain on their arms, and spent a good part of the day reconnoitering the enemy's works. In the afternoon he retired to Valentine's Hill, and the next day marched to Dobb's Ferry, where he was joined by the Count de Rochambeau on the 6th of July. The two armies now encamped; the Americans in two lines, resting on the Hudson at Dobb's Ferry, where it was covered by batteries, and extending eastward toward the Neperan or Sawmill River; the French in a single line on the hill

further east, reaching to the Bronx River. The beautiful valley of the Neperan intervened between the encampments. It was a lovely country for a summer encampment—breezy hills commanding wide prospects, umbrageous valleys watered by bright pastoral streams, the Bronx, the Spraine, and the Neperan, and abounding with never-failing springs. The French encampment made a gallant display along the Greenburgh hills. Some of the officers, young men of rank, to whom this was all a service of romance, took a pride in decorating their tents, and forming little gardens in their vicinity. "We have a charming position among rocks and under magnificent tulip-trees;" writes one of them, the Count Dumas. General Washington was an object of their enthusiasm. He visited the tents they had so gayly embellished; for, with all his gravity, he was fond of the company of young men. They were apprised of his coming, and set out on their camp-tables plans of the battle of Trenton, of West Point, and other scenes connected with the war. The greatest harmony prevailed between the armies. The two commanders had their respective head-quarters in farm-houses, and occasionally, on festive occasions, long tables were spread in the adjacent barns, which were converted into banqueting halls. The young French officers gained the good graces of the country belles, though little acquainted with their language. Their encampment was particularly gay, and it was the boast of an old lady of the neighborhood many

years after the war, that she had danced at head-quarters when a girl with the celebrated Marshal Berthier, at that time one of the aides-de-camp of the Count de Rochambeau.*

The two armies thus encamped for three or four weeks. In the meantime letters urged Washington's presence in Virginia. Richard Henry Lee advised that he should come with two or three thousand good troops, and be clothed with dictatorial powers. "There is nothing, I think, more certain," writes Lee, "than that your personal call would bring into immediate exertion the force and the resources of this State and the neighboring ones, which, directed as they would be, will effectually disappoint and baffle the deep-laid schemes of the enemy."

"I am fully persuaded, and upon good military principles," writes Washington in reply, "that the measures I have adopted will give more effectual and speedy relief to the State of Virginia, than my marching thither, with dictatorial powers, at the head of every man I could draw from hence without leaving the important posts on the North River quite defenseless, and these States open to devastation and ruin. My present plan of operation, which I have been preparing with all the zeal and activity in my power, will, I am morally certain, with proper support, produce one of two things, either the fall of

* Bolton's *Hist. of Westchester Co.*, vol. i. p. 243.

New York, or a withdrawal of the troops from Virginia, excepting a garrison at Portsmouth, at which place I have no doubt of the enemy's intention of establishing a permanent post."

Within two or three days after this letter was written, Washington crossed the river at Dobb's Ferry, accompanied by the Count de Rochambeau, General de Beville, and General Duportail, to reconnoiter the British posts on the north end of New York Island. They were escorted by one hundred and fifty of the New Jersey troops, and spent the day on the Jersey heights ascertaining the exact position of the enemy on the opposite shore. Their next movement was to reconnoiter the enemy's posts at King's Bridge and on the east side of New York Island, and to cut off, if possible, such of Delancey's corps as should be found without the British lines. Five thousand troops, French and American, led by the Count de Chastellux and General Lincoln, were to protect this reconnoissance, and menace the enemy's posts. Everything was prepared in secrecy. On the 21st of July, at eight o'clock in the evening, the troops began their march in separate columns; part down the Hudson River road; part down the Sawmill River valley; part by the East Chester road. Scammel's light infantry advanced through the fields to waylay the roads, stop all communication, and prevent intelligence getting to the enemy. Sheldon's cavalry, with the Connecticut troops, were to scour Throg's Neck. Sheldon's infantry and

Lauzun's lancers were to do the same with the refuges region of Morrisania.

The whole detachment arrived at King's Bridge about daylight, and formed on the height back of Fort Independence. The enemy's forts on New York Island did not appear to have the least intelligence of what was going on, nor to be aware that hostile troops were upon the heights opposite until the latter displayed themselves in full array, their arms flashing in the morning sunshine, and their banners, American and French, unfolded to the breeze.

While the enemy was thus held in check, Washington and De Rochambeau, accompanied by engineers and by their staffs, set out under the escort of a troop of dragoons to reconnoiter the enemy's position and works from every point of view. It was a wide reconnoissance, extending across the country outside of the British lines from the Hudson to the Sound. The whole was done slowly and scientifically, exact notes and diagrams being made of everything that might be of importance in future operations. As the "cortege" moved slowly along, or paused to make observation, it was cannonaded from the distant works, or from the armed vessels stationed on the neighboring waters, but without injuring it or quickening its movements.

According to De Rochambeau's account, the two reconnoitering generals were at one time in an awkward and hazardous predicament. They had passed, he said, to an

island separated by an arm of the sea from the enemy's post on Long Island, and the engineers were employed in making scientific observations, regardless of the firing of small vessels stationed in the Sound. During this time, the two generals, exhausted by fatigue and summer heat, slept under shelter of a hedge. De Rochambeau was the first to awake, and was startled at observing the state of the tide, which, during their slumber, had been rapidly rising. Awakening Washington and calling his attention to it, they hastened to the causeway by which they had crossed from the mainland. It was covered with water. Two small boats were brought, in which they embarked with the saddles and bridles of their horses. Two American dragoons then returned in the boats to the shore of the island, where the horses remained under care of their comrades. Two of the horses, which were good swimmers, were held by the bridle and guided across; the rest were driven into the water by the smack of the whip, and followed their leaders; the boats then brought over the rest of the party. De Rochambeau admired this manœuvre as a specimen of American tactics in the management of wild horses; but he thought it lucky that the enemy knew nothing of their embarrassment, which lasted nearly an hour, otherwise they might literally have been caught napping.

While the enemy's works had been thoroughly reconnoitered, light troops and lancers had performed their duty in scouring the neighborhood. The refugee posts

which had desolated the country were broken up. Most of the refugees, Washington says, had fled and hid themselves in secret places; some got over by stealth to the adjacent islands, and to the enemy's shipping, and a few were caught. Having effected the purposes of their expedition, the two generals set off with their troops, on the 23d, for their encampment, where they arrived about midnight.

The immediate effect of this threatening movement of Washington, appears in a letter of Sir Henry Clinton to Cornwallis, dated July 26th, requesting him to order three regiments to New York from Carolina. "I shall probably want them as well as the troops you may be able to spare me from the Chesapeake for such offensive or defensive operations as may offer in this quarter." *

And Washington writes to Lafayette a few days subsequently: "I think we have already effected one part of the plan of the campaign settled at Weathersfield, that is, giving a substantial relief to the Southern States, by obliging the enemy to recall a considerable part of their force from thence. Our views must now be turned towards endeavoring to expel them totally from those States, if we find ourselves incompetent to the siege of New York."

We will now give the reader a view of affairs in Virginia, and show how they were ultimately affected by these military manœuvres and demonstrations in the neighborhood of King's Bridge.

* *Correspondence relative to Operations in Virginia*, p. 153.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MOVEMENTS AND COUNTER-MOVEMENTS OF CORNWALLIS AND LAFAYETTE IN VIRGINIA.—TARLETON AND HIS TROOPERS SCOUR THE COUNTRY.—A DASH AT THE STATE LEGISLATURE.—ATTEMPT TO SURPRISE THE GOVERNOR AT MONTICELLO.—RETREAT OF JEFFERSON TO CARTER'S MOUNTAIN.—STEUBEN OUTWITTED BY SIMCOE.—LAFAYETTE JOINED BY WAYNE AND STEUBEN.—ACTS ON THE AGGRESSIVE.—DESPERATE MÉLÉE OF McPHERSON AND SIMCOE.—CORNWALLIS PURSUED TO JAMESTOWN ISLAND.—MAD ANTHONY IN A MORASS.—HIS IMPETUOUS VALOR.—ALERTNESS OF LAFAYETTE.—WASHINGTON'S OPINION OF THE VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN.

THE first object of Lord Cornwallis on the junction of his forces at Petersburg in May, was to strike a blow at Lafayette. The marquis was encamped on the north side of James River, between Wilton and Richmond, with about one thousand regulars, two thousand militia, and fifty dragoons. He was waiting for reinforcements of militia, and for the arrival of General Wayne, with the Pennsylvania line. The latter had been ordered to the South by Washington, nearly three months previously, but unavoidably delayed. Joined by these, Lafayette would venture to receive a blow, "that being beaten, he might at least be

beaten with decency, and Cornwallis pay something for his victory." *

His lordship hoped to draw him into an action before thus reinforced, and with that view, marched, on the 24th of May, from Petersburg to James River, which he crossed at Westover, about thirty miles below Richmond. Here he was joined on the 26th by a reinforcement just arrived from New York, part of which he sent under General Leslie to strengthen the garrison at Portsmouth. He was relieved also from military companionship with the infamous Arnold, who obtained leave of absence to return to New York, where business of importance was said to demand his attention. While he was in command of the British army in Virginia, Lafayette had refused to hold any correspondence, or reciprocate any of the civilities of war with him; for which he was highly applauded by Washington.

Being now strongly reinforced, Cornwallis moved to dislodge Lafayette from Richmond. The latter, conscious of the inferiority of his forces, decamped as soon as he heard his lordship had crossed James River. "I am resolved," said he, "on a war of skirmishes, without engaging too far, and above all, to be on my guard against that numerous and excellent cavalry, which the militia dread, as if they were so many savage beasts." He now directed his march toward the upper country, inclining

* Letter to Hamilton, May 23d.

to the north, to favor a junction with Wayne. Cornwallis followed him as far as the upper part of Hanover County, destroying public stores wherever found. He appears to have undervalued Lafayette, on account of his youth. "The boy cannot escape me," said he, in a letter which was intercepted. The youth of the marquis, however, aided the celerity of his movements; and now that he had the responsibility of an independent command, he restrained his youthful fire, and love of enterprise. Independence had rendered him cautious. "I am afraid of myself," said he, "as much as of the enemy." *

Cornwallis soon found it impossible either to overtake Lafayette, or prevent his junction with Wayne; he turned his attention, therefore, to other objects.

Greene, in his passage through Virginia, had urged the importance of removing horses out of the way of the enemy; his caution had been neglected; the consequences were now felt. The great number of fine horses in the stables of Virginia gentlemen, who are noted for their love of the noble animal, had enabled Cornwallis to mount many of his troops in first-rate style. These he employed in scouring the country, and destroying public stores. Tarleton and his legion, it is said, were mounted on race-horses. "Under this cloud of light troops," said Lafayette, "it is difficult to counteract any rapid movements they may choose to take!"

* Letter to Col. Alex. Hamilton, May 23, 1780.

The State legislature had been removed for safety to Charlottesville, where it was assembled for the purpose of levying taxes, and drafting militia. Tarleton, with one hundred and eighty cavalry and seventy mounted infantry, was ordered by Cornwallis to make a dash there, break up the legislature, and carry off members. On his way thither, on the 4th of June, he captured and destroyed a convoy of arms and clothing destined for Greene's army in North Carolina. At another place he surprised several persons of note at the house of a Dr. Walker, but lingered so long breakfasting, that a person mounted on a fleet horse had time to reach Charlottesville before him, and spread the alarm. Tarleton crossed the Rivanna, which washes the hill on which Charlottesville is situated; dispersed a small force collected on the bank, and galloped into the town thinking to capture the whole assembly. Seven alone fell into his hands; the rest had made their escape. No better success attended a party of horse under Captain McLeod, detached to surprise the governor (Thomas Jefferson), at his residence in Monticello, about three miles from Charlottesville, where several members of the legislature were his guests. The dragoons were espied winding up the mountain; the guests dispersed; the family was hurried off to the residence of Colonel Carter, six miles distant, while the governor himself made a rapid retreat on horseback to Carter's Mountain.

Having set fire to all the public stores at Charlottes-

ville, Tarleton pushed for the point of Fork at the confluence of the Rivanna and Fluvanna; to aid, if necessary, a detachment of yagers, infantry, and hussars, sent under Colonel Simcoe to destroy a great quantity of military stores collected at that post. The Baron Steuben, who was stationed there with five hundred Virginia regulars and a few militia, and had heard of the march of Tarleton, had succeeded in transporting the greater part of the stores, as well as his troops, across the river, and as the water was deep and the boats were all on his side, he might have felt himself secure. The unexpected appearance of Simcoe's infantry, however, designedly spread out on the opposite heights, deceived him into the idea that it was the van of the British army. In his alarm he made a night retreat of thirty miles, leaving the greater part of the stores scattered along the river bank, which were destroyed the next morning by a small detachment of the enemy sent across in canoes.

On the 10th of June, Lafayette was at length gladdened by the arrival of Wayne with about nine hundred of the Pennsylvania line. Thus reinforced, he changed his whole plan, and ventured on the aggressive. Cornwallis had gotten between him and a large deposit of military stores at Albemarle Old Court-house.

The marquis, by a rapid march at night, through a road long disused, threw himself between the British army and the stores, and, being joined by a numerous

body of mountain militia, took a strong position to dispute the advance of the enemy.

Cornwallis did not think it advisable to pursue this enterprise, especially as he heard Lafayette would soon be joined by forces under Baron Steuben. Yielding easy credence, therefore, to a report that the stores had been removed from Albemarle Court-house, he turned his face toward the lower part of Virginia, and made a retrograde march, first to Richmond, and afterwards to Williamsburg.

Lafayette, being joined by Steuben and his forces, had about four thousand men under him, one half of whom were regulars. He now followed the British army at the distance of eighteen or twenty miles, throwing forward his light troops to harass their rear, which was covered by Tarleton and Simcoe with their cavalry and infantry.

Cornwallis arrived at Williamsburg on the 25th, and sent out Simcoe with his rangers and a company of yagers to destroy some boats and stores on the Chickahominy River, and to sweep off the cattle of the neighborhood. Lafayette heard of the ravage, and detached Lieutenant-colonel Butler, of the Pennsylvania line, with a corps of light troops and a body of horse under Major McPherson, to intercept the marauders. As the infantry could not push on fast enough for the emergency, McPherson took up fifty of them behind fifty of his dragoons, and dashed on. He overtook a company of Simcoe's rangers under Captain Shank, about six miles from Williamsburg, for-

aging at a farm ; a sharp encounter took place ; McPherson at the outset was unhorsed and severely hurt. The action continued. Simcoe with his infantry, who had been in the advance convoying a drove of cattle, now engaged in the fight. Butler's riflemen began to arrive, and supported the dragoons. It was a desperate mêlée ; much execution was done on both sides. Neither knew the strength of the force they were contending with ; but supposed it the advance guard of the opposite army. An alarm gun was fired by the British on a neighboring hill. It was answered by alarm guns at Williamsburg. The Americans supposed the whole British force coming out to assail them, and began to retire. Simcoe, imagining Lafayette to be at hand, likewise drew off, and pursued his march to Williamsburg. Both parties fought well ; both had been severely handled ; both claimed a victory, though neither gained one. The loss in killed and wounded on both sides was severe for the number engaged ; but the statements vary, and were never reconciled. It is certain the result gave great satisfaction to the Americans, and inspired them with redoubled ardor.

An express was received by Cornwallis at Williamsburg which obliged him to change his plans. The movements of Washington in the neighborhood of New York, menacing an attack, had produced the desired effect. Sir Henry Clinton, alarmed for the safety of the place, had written to Cornwallis, requiring a part of his troops for its protection. His lordship prepared to comply with this req-

uisition, but as it would leave him too weak to continue at Williamsburg, he set out on the 4th of July for Portsmouth.

Lafayette followed him on the ensuing day, and took post within nine miles of his camp; intending, when the main body of the enemy should have crossed the ford to the island of Jamestown, to fall upon the rear-guard. Cornwallis suspected his design, and prepared to take advantage of it. The wheel carriages, bat horses, and baggage, were passed over to the island under the escort of the Queen's Rangers; making a great display, as if the main body had crossed; his lordship, however, with the greater part of his forces, remained on the main-land, his right covered by ponds, the centre and left by morasses over which a few narrow causeways of logs connected his position with the country, and James Island lay in the rear. His camp was concealed by a skirt of woods, and covered by an outpost.

In the morning of the 6th, as the Americans were advancing, a negro and a dragoon, employed by Tarleton, threw themselves in their way, pretending to be deserters, and informed them that the body of the king's troops had passed James River in the night, leaving nothing behind but the rear-guard, composed of the British legion and a detachment of infantry. Persuaded of the fact, Lafayette with his troops crossed the morass on the left of the enemy by a narrow causeway of logs, and halted beyond about sunset. Wayne was detached with a body of rifle-

men, dragoons and continental infantry, to make the attack, while the marquis with nine hundred Continentals and some militia stood ready to support him.

Wayne easily routed a patrol of cavalry and drove in the pickets, who had been ordered to give way readily. The outpost which covered the camp defended itself more obstinately, though exceedingly galled by the riflemen. Wayne pushed forward with the Pennsylvania line, eight hundred strong, and three field-pieces to attack it; at the first discharge of a cannon more than two thousand of the enemy emerged from their concealment, and he found too late that the whole British line was in battle array before him. To retreat was more dangerous than to go on. So thinking, with that impetuous valor which had gained him the name of Mad Anthony, he ordered a charge to be sounded, and threw himself horse and foot with shouts upon the enemy. It was a sanguinary conflict and a desperate one, for the enemy were outflanking him right and left. Fortunately, the heaviness of the fire had awakened the suspicions of Lafayette,—it was too strong for the outpost of a rear-guard. Spurring to a point of land which commanded a view of the British camp, he discovered the actual force of the enemy, and the peril of Wayne. Galloping back, he sent word to Wayne to fall back to General Muhlenburg's brigade, which had just arrived, and was forming within half a mile of the scene of conflict. Wayne did so in good order, leaving behind his three cannon, the horses which drew them having been killed.

The whole army then retired across the morass. The enemy's cavalry would have pursued them, but Cornwallis forbade it. The night was falling. The hardihood of Wayne's attack, and his sudden retreat, it is said, deceived and perplexed his lordship. He thought the Americans more strong than they really were, and the retreat a mere feint to draw him into an ambuscade. That retreat, if followed close, might have been converted into a disastrous flight.

The loss of the Americans in this brief but severe conflict is stated by Lafayette to have been one hundred and eighteen killed, wounded and prisoners, including ten officers. The British loss was said to be five officers wounded, and seventy-five privates killed and wounded. "Our field officers," said Wayne, "were generally dismounted by having their horses either killed or wounded under them. I will not condole with the marquis for the loss of two of his, as he was frequently requested to keep at a greater distance. His natural bravery rendered him deaf to admonition."

Lafayette retreated to Green Springs, where he rallied and reposed his troops. Cornwallis crossed over to Jamestown Island after dark, and three days afterwards, passing James River with his main force, proceeded to Portsmouth. His object was, in conformity to his instructions from the ministry, to establish there or elsewhere on the Chesapeake, a permanent post, to serve as a central point for naval and military operations.

In his letters to Washington giving an account of these events, Lafayette says: "I am anxious to know your opinion of the Virginia campaign. The subjugation of this State was incontestably the principal object of the ministry. I think your diversion has been of more use than any of my manœuvres; but the latter have been above all directed by political views. As long as his lordship desired an action, not a musket has been fired; the moment he would avoid a combat, we began a war of skirmishes; but I had always care not to compromise the army. The naval superiority of the enemy, his superiority in cavalry, in regular troops, and his thousand other advantages, make me consider myself lucky to have come off safe and sound. I had my eye fixed on negotiations in Europe, and I made it my aim to give his lordship the disgrace of a retreat." *

We will now turn to resume the course of General Greene's campaigning in the Carolinas.

* *Memoires de Lafayette*, t. i. p. 445.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GREENE'S RETROGRADE OPERATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA.—APPEARS BEFORE CAMDEN.—AFFAIR AT HOBKIRK'S HILL.—RAWDON ABANDONS CAMDEN.—RAPID SUCCESSES OF THE AMERICANS.—GREENE'S ATTACK ON THE FORTRESS OF NINETY-SIX.—OPERATIONS AGAINST LORD RAWDON.—GREENE ON THE HIGH HILLS OF SANTEE.—SUMTER SCOURS THE LOWER COUNTRY.—DASH OF COLONEL WADE HAMPTON AT THE GATES OF CHARLESTON.—EXPLOITS OF LEE AND HAMPTON.—OF CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG AT QUIMBY BRIDGE.—ACTION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.—END OF THE CAMPAIGN.

IT will be recollected that Greene, on the 5th of April, set out from Deep River on a retrograde march, to carry the war again into South Carolina, beginning by an attack on Lord Rawdon's post at Camden. Sumter and Marion had been keeping alive the revolutionary fire in that State; the former on the northeast frontier, the latter in his favorite fighting ground between the Pedee and Santee rivers. On the reappearance of Greene, they stood ready to aid with heart and hand.

On his way to Camden, Greene detached Lee to join Marion with his legion, and make an attack upon Fort Watson by way of diversion. For himself, he appeared before Camden, but finding it too strong and too well

garrisoned, fell back about two miles, and took post at Hobkirk's Hill, hoping to draw his lordship out. He succeeded but too well. His lordship attacked him on the 25th of April, coming upon him partly by surprise. There was a hard-fought battle, but through some false move among part of his troops, Greene was obliged to retreat. His lordship did not pursue, but shut himself up in Camden, waiting to be rejoined by part of his garrison which was absent.

Greene posted himself near Camden Ferry on the Wateree, to intercept these reinforcements. Lee and Marion, who had succeeded in capturing Fort Watson, also took a position on the high hills of Santee for the same purpose. Their efforts were unavailing. Lord Rawdon was rejoined by the other part of his troops. His superior force now threatened to give him the mastery. Greene felt the hazardous nature of his situation. His troops were fatigued by their long marchings; he was disappointed of promised aid and reinforcements from Virginia; still he was undismayed, and prepared for another of his long and stubborn retreats. "We must always operate," said he, "on the maxim that your enemy will do what he ought to do. Lord Rawdon will push us back to the mountains, but we will dispute every inch of ground in the best manner we can." Such were his words to General Davie on the evening of the 9th of May, as he sat in his tent with a map before him studying the roads and fastnesses of the country. An express was to set off

for Philadelphia the next morning, and he requested General Davie, who was of that city, to write to the members of Congress with whom he was acquainted, painting in the strongest colors their situation and gloomy prospects.

The very next morning there was a joyful reverse. Greene sent for General Davie. "Rawdon," cried he, exultingly, "is preparing to evacuate Camden; that place was the key of the enemy's line of posts, they will now all fall or be evacuated; all will now go well. Burn your letters. I shall march immediately to the Congaree."

His lordship had heard of the march of Cornwallis into Virginia, and that all hope of aid from him was at an end. His garrison was out of provisions. All supplies were cut off by the Americans; he had no choice but to evacuate. He left Camden in flames. Immense quantities of stores and baggage were consumed, together with the court-house, the gaol, and many private houses.

Rapid successes now attended the American arms. Fort Motte, the middle post between Camden and Ninety-Six, was taken by Marion and Lee. Lee next captured Granby, and marched to aid Pickens in the siege of Augusta; while Greene, having acquired a supply of arms, ammunition, and provisions, from the captured forts, sat down before the fortress of Ninety-Six, on the 22d of May. It was the great mart and stronghold of the royalists, and was principally garrisoned by royalists from New Jersey and New York, commanded by Colonel Cruger, a native of New York. The siege lasted for

nearly a month. The place was valiantly defended. Lee arrived with his legion, having failed before Augusta, and invested a stockaded fort which formed part of the works.

Word was brought that Lord Rawdon was pressing forward with reinforcements, and but a few miles distant on the Saluda. Greene endeavored to get up Sumter, Marion, and Pickens, to his assistance, but they were too far on the right of Lord Rawdon to form a junction. The troops were eager to storm the works before his lordship should arrive. A partial assault was made on the 18th of June. It was a bloody contest. The stockaded fort was taken, but the troops were repulsed from the main works.

Greene retreated across the Saluda, and halted at Bush River, at twenty miles' distance, to observe the motion of the enemy. In a letter thence to Washington, he writes: "My fears are principally from the enemy's superior cavalry. To the northward cavalry is nothing, from the numerous fences; but to the southward, a disorder, by a superior cavalry, may be improved into a defeat, and a defeat into a rout. Virginia and North Carolina could not be brought to consider cavalry of such great importance as they are to the security of the army and the safety of a country."

Lord Rawdon entered Ninety-Six on the 21st, but sallied forth again on the 24th, taking with him all the troops capable of fatigue, two thousand in number, with-

out wheel carriage of any kind, or even knapsacks, hoping by a rapid move to overtake Greene. Want of provisions soon obliged him to give up the pursuit, and return to Ninety-Six. Leaving about one half of his force there, under Colonel Cruger, he sallied a second time from Ninety-Six, at the head of eleven hundred infantry, with cavalry, artillery, and field-pieces, marching by the south side of the Saluda for the Congaree.

He was now pursued in his turn by Greene and Lee. In this march more than fifty of his lordship's soldiers fell dead from heat, fatigue, and privation. At Orangeburg, where he arrived on the 8th of July, his lordship was joined by a large detachment under Colonel Stuart.

Greene had followed him closely, and having collected all his detachments, and being joined by Sumter, appeared within four miles of Orangeburg, on the 10th of July, and offered battle. The offer was not accepted, and the position of Lord Rawdon was too strong to be attacked. Greene remained there two or three days; when, learning that Colonel Cruger was advancing with the residue of the forces from Ninety-Six, which would again give his lordship a superiority of force, he moved off with his infantry on the night of the 13th of July, crossed the Saluda, and posted himself on the east side of the Wateree, at the high hills of Santee. In this salubrious and delightful region, where the air was pure and breezy, and the water delicate, he allowed his weary soldiers to repose and refresh themselves, awaiting the ar-

rival of some continental troops and militia from North Carolina, when he intended to resume his enterprise of driving the enemy from the interior of the country.

At the time when he moved from the neighborhood of Orangeburg (July 13th), he detached Sumter with about a thousand light troops to scour the lower country, and attack the British posts in the vicinity of Charleston, now left uncovered by the concentration of their forces at Orangeburg. Under Sumter acted Marion, Lee, the Hamptons, and other enterprising partisans. They were to act separately in breaking up the minor posts at and about Dorchester, but to unite at Monk's Corner, where Lieutenant-colonel Coates was stationed with the ninth regiment. This post carried, they were to reunite with Greene's army on the high hills of Santee.

Scarce was Sumter on his march, when he received a letter from Greene, dated July 14th, stating that Cruger had formed a junction with Lord Rawdon the preceding night; no time, therefore, was to be lost. "Push your operations night and day: station a party to watch the enemy's motions at Orangeburg. Keep Colonel Lee and General Marion advised of all matters from above, and tell Colonel Lee to thunder even at the gates of Charleston."

Conformably to these orders, Colonel Henry Hampton with a party was posted to keep an eye on Orangeburg. Lee with his legion, accompanied by Lieutenant-colonel Wade Hampton, and a detachment of cavalry, was sent to carry Dorchester, and then press forward to the gates

of Charleston; while Sumter, with the main body, took up his line of march along the road on the south side of the Congaree, towards Monk's Corner.

As Lee approached Dorchester, Colonel Wade Hampton, with his cavalry, passed to the east of that place, to a bridge on Goose Creek, to cut off all communication between the garrison and Monk's Corner. His sudden appearance gave the alarm, the garrison abandoned its post, and when Lee arrived there he found it deserted. He proceeded to secure a number of horses and wagons, and some fixed ammunition, which the garrison had left behind, and to send them off to Hampton. Hampton, kept in suspense by this delay, lost patience. He feared that the alarm would spread through the country, and the dash into the vicinity of Charleston be prevented—or, perhaps, that Lee might intend to make it by himself. Abandoning the bridge at Goose Creek, therefore, he set off with his cavalry, clattered down to the neighborhood of the lines, and threw the city into confusion. The bells rang, alarm guns were fired, the citizens turned out under arms. Hampton captured a patrol of dragoons and a guard, at the Quarter House; completed his bravado by parading his cavalry in sight of the sentinels on the advanced works, and then retired, carrying off fifty prisoners, several of them officers.

Lee arrived in the neighborhood on the following day, but too late to win any laurels. Hampton had been beforehand with him, made the dash, and "thundered at

the gate." Both now hastened to rejoin Sumter on the evening of the 16th, who was only waiting to collect his detachments, before he made an attack on Colonel Coates at Monk's Corner. The assault was to be made on the following morning. During the night Coates decamped in silence; the first signal of his departure was the bursting of flames through the roof of a brick church, which he had used as a magazine, and which contained stores that could not be carried away. A pursuit was commenced; Lee with his legion, and Hampton with the State cavalry, took the lead. Sumter followed with the infantry. The rear-guard of the British, about one hundred strong, was overtaken with the baggage, at the distance of eighteen miles. They were new troops, recently arrived from Ireland, and had not seen service. On being charged by the cavalry sword in hand, they threw down their arms without firing a shot, and cried for quarter, which was granted. While Lee was securing them, Captain Armstrong with the first section of cavalry pushed on in pursuit of Coates and the main body. That officer had crossed a wooden bridge over Quimby Creek, loosened the planks, and was only waiting to be rejoined by his rear-guard, to throw them off, and cut off all pursuit. His troops were partly on a causeway beyond the bridge, partly crowded in a lane. He had heard no alarm guns, and knew nothing of an enemy being at hand, until he saw Armstrong spurring up with his section. Coates gave orders for his

troops to halt, form, and march up; a howitzer was brought to bear upon the bridge, and a fatigue party rushed forward to throw off the planks. Armstrong saw the danger, dashed across the bridge, with his section, drove off the artillerists, and captured the howitzer before it could be discharged. The fatigue men, who had been at work on the bridge, snatched up their guns, gave a volley, and fled. Two dragoons fell dead by the howitzer; others were severely wounded. Armstrong's party, in crossing the bridge, had displaced some of the planks and formed a chasm. Lieutenant Carrington, with the second section of dragoons, leaped over it; the chasm being thus enlarged, the horses of the third section refused. A pell-mell fight took place between the handful of dragoons who had crossed, and some of the enemy. Armstrong and Carrington were engaged hand to hand with Colonel Coates and his officers, who defended themselves from behind a wagon. The troops were thronging to their aid from lane and causeway. Armstrong, seeing the foe too strong in front, and no reinforcement coming on in rear, wheeled off with some of his men to the left, galloped into the woods, and pushed up along the stream to ford it, and seek the main body.

During the mêlée, Lee had come up and endeavored with the dragoons of the third section to replace the planks of the bridge. Their efforts were vain; the water was deep, the mud deeper; there was no foothold, nor was there any firm spot where to swim the horses across.

While they were thus occupied, Colonel Coates, with his men, opened a fire upon them from the other end of the bridge; having no fire-arms to reply with, they were obliged to retire. The remainder of the planks were then thrown off from the bridge, after which Colonel Coates took post on an adjacent plantation, made the dwelling-house, which stood on a rising ground, his citadel, planted the howitzer before it, and distributed part of his men in outhouses and within fences and garden pickets, which sheltered them from the attack of cavalry. Here he awaited the arrival of Sumter with the main body, determined to make a desperate defense.

It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon, that Sumter with his forces appeared upon the ground, having had to make a considerable circuit on account of the destruction of the bridge.

By four o'clock the attack commenced. Sumter, with part of the troops, advanced in front under cover of a line of negro huts, which he wished to secure. Marion, with his brigade, much reduced in number, approached on the right of the enemy, where there was no shelter but fences; the cavalry, not being able to act, remained at a distance as a reserve, and, if necessary, to cover a retreat.

Sumter's brigade soon got possession of the huts, where they used their rifles with sure effect. Marion and his men rushed up through a galling fire to the fences on the right. The enemy retired within the house

and garden, and kept up a sharp fire from doors and windows and picketed fence. Unfortunately, the Americans had neglected to bring on their artillery; their rifles and muskets were not sufficient to force the enemy from his stronghold. Having repaired the bridge, they sent off for the artillery and a supply of powder, which accompanied it. The evening was at hand; their ammunition was exhausted, and they retired in good order, intending to renew the combat with artillery in the morning. Leaving the cavalry to watch and control the movements of the enemy, they drew off across Quimby Bridge, and encamped at the distance of three miles.

Here, when they came to compare notes, it was found that the loss in killed and wounded had chiefly fallen on Marion's corps. His men, from their exposed situation, had borne the brunt of the battle; while Sumter's had suffered but little, being mostly sheltered in the huts. Jealousy and distrust were awakened, and discord reigned in the camp. Partisan and volunteer troops readily fall asunder under such circumstances. Many moved off in the night. Lee, accustomed to act independently, and unwilling, perhaps, to acknowledge Sumter as his superior officer, took up his line of march for head-quarters without consulting him. Sumter still had force enough, now that he was joined by the artillery, to have held the enemy in a state of siege; but he was short of ammunition, only twenty miles from Charleston, at a place accessible by tide-water, and he apprehended the approach of Lord

Rawdon, who, it was said, was moving down from Orangeburg. He therefore retired across the Santee, and rejoined Greene at his encampment.

So ended this foray, which fell far short of the expectations formed from the spirit and activity of the leaders and their men. Various errors have been pointed out in their operations, but concerted schemes are rarely carried out in all their parts by partisan troops. One of the best effects of the incursion, was the drawing down Lord Rawdon from Orangeburg, with five hundred of his troops. He returned no more to the upper country, but sailed not long after from Charleston for Europe.

Colonel Stuart, who was left in command at Orangeburg, moved forward from that place, and encamped on the south side of the Congaree River, near its junction with the Wateree, and within sixteen miles of Greene's position on the high hills of Santee. The two armies lay in sight of each other's fires, but two large rivers intervened, to secure each party from sudden attack. Both armies, however, needed repose, and military operations were suspended, as if by mutual consent, during the sultry summer heat.

The campaign had been a severe and trying one, and checkered with vicissitudes; but Greene had succeeded in regaining the greater part of Georgia and the two Carolinas, and, as he said, only wanted a little assistance from the North to complete their recovery. He was soon rejoiced by a letter from Washington, informing him that

a detachment from the army of Lafayette might be expected to bring him the required assistance; but he was made still more happy by the following cordial passage in the letter: "It is with the warmest pleasure I express my full approbation of the various movements and operations which your military conduct has lately exhibited, while I confess to you that I am unable to conceive what more could have been done under your circumstances, than has been displayed by your little, persevering, and determined army."

CHAPTER XXV.

WASHINGTON DISAPPOINTED AS TO REINFORCEMENTS. — FRENCH ARMAMENT DESTINED FOR THE CHESAPEAKE.—ATTEMPTS ON NEW YORK POSTPONED.—MARCH OF THE ARMIES TO THE CHESAPEAKE.—STRATAGEMS TO DECEIVE THE ENEMY.—ARNOLD RAVAGES NEW LONDON.—WASHINGTON AT PHILADELPHIA. — MARCH OF THE TWO ARMIES THROUGH THE CITY. — CORNWALLIS AT YORKTOWN.—PREPARATIONS TO PROCEED AGAINST HIM.—VISIT TO MOUNT VERNON.

AFTER the grand reconnoissance of the posts on New York Island, related in a former page, the confederate armies remained encamped about Dobb's Ferry and the Greenburg hills, awaiting an augmentation of force for their meditated attack. To Washington's great disappointment, his army was but tardily and scantily recruited, while the garrison of New York was augmented by the arrival of three thousand Hessian troops from Europe. In this predicament he despatched a circular letter to the governments of the Eastern States, representing his delicate and embarrassed situation. "Unable to advance with prudence, beyond my present position," writes he, "while, perhaps, in the general opinion, my force is equal to the commencement of operations against New York, my conduct must appear, if not

blamable, highly mysterious at least. Our allies, who were made to expect a very considerable augmentation of force by this time, instead of seeing a prospect of advancing, must conjecture, upon good grounds, that the campaign will waste fruitlessly away. It will be no small degree of triumph to our enemies, and will have a pernicious influence upon our friends in Europe, should they find such a failure of resource, or such a want of energy to draw it out, that our boasted and extensive preparations end only in idle parade. . . . The fulfillment of my engagements must depend upon the degree of vigor with which the executives of the several States exercise the powers with which they have been vested, and enforce the laws lately passed for filling up and supplying the army. In full confidence that the means which have been voted will be obtained, I shall continue my operations."

Until we study Washington's full, perspicuous letters, we know little of the difficulties he had to struggle with in conducting his campaigns; how often the sounding resolves of legislative bodies disappointed him; how often he had to maintain a bold front when his country failed to back him; how often, as in the siege of Boston, he had to carry on the war without powder!

In a few days came letters from Lafayette, dated 26th and 30th of July, speaking of the embarkation of the greatest part of Cornwallis's army at Portsmouth. "There are in Hampton Roads thirty transport ships full of

troops, most of them red coats, and eight or ten brigs with cavalry on board." He supposed their destination to be New York, yet, though wind and weather were favorable, they did not sail. "Should a French fleet now come into Hampton Roads," adds the sanguine marquis, "the British army would, I think, be ours."

At this juncture arrived the French frigate Concorde at Newport, bringing despatches from Admiral the Count de Grasse. He was to leave St. Domingo on the 3d of August, with between twenty-five and thirty ships of the line, and a considerable body of land forces, and to steer immediately for the Chesapeake.

This changed the face of affairs, and called for a change in the game. All attempt upon New York was postponed; the whole of the French army, and as large a part of the Americans as could be spared, were to move to Virginia, and coöperate with the Count de Grasse for the redemption of the Southern States. Washington apprised the count by letter of this intention. He wrote also to Lafayette on the 15th of August: "By the time this reaches you, the Count de Grasse will either be in the Chesapeake, or may be looked for every moment. Under these circumstances, whether the enemy remain in full force, or whether they have only a detachment left, you will immediately take such a position as will best enable you to prevent their sudden retreat through North Carolina, which I presume they will attempt the instant they perceive so formidable an armament."

Should General Wayne, with the troops destined for South Carolina, still remain in the neighborhood of James River, and the enemy have made no detachment to the southward, the marquis was to detain those troops until he heard again from Washington, and was to inform General Greene of the cause of their detention.

"You shall hear further from me," concludes the letter, "as soon as I have concerted plans and formed dispositions for sending a reinforcement from hence. In the meantime, I have only to recommend a continuance of that prudence and good conduct which you have manifested through the whole of your campaign. You will be particularly careful to conceal the expected arrival of the count; because, if the enemy are not apprised of it, they will stay on board their transports in the bay, which will be the luckiest circumstance in the world."

Washington's "soul was now in arms." At length, after being baffled and disappointed so often by the incompetency of his means, and above all, thwarted by the enemy's naval potency, he had the possibility of coping with them both on land and sea. The contemplated expedition was likely to consummate his plans, and wind up the fortunes of the war, and he determined to lead it in person. He would take with him something more than two thousand of the American army; the rest, chiefly Northern troops, were to remain with General Heath, who was to hold command of West Point, and the other posts of the Hudson.

Perfect secrecy was maintained as to this change of plan. Preparations were still carried on, as if for an attack upon New York. An extensive encampment was marked out in the Jerseys, and ovens erected, and fuel provided for the baking of bread; as if a part of the besieging force was to be stationed there, thence to make a descent upon the enemy's garrison on Staten Island, in aid of the operations against the city. The American troops, themselves, were kept in ignorance of their destination. "General Washington," observes one of the shrewdest of them, "matures his great plans and designs under an impenetrable veil of secrecy, and while we repose the fullest confidence in our chief, our opinions (as to his intentions) must be founded only on doubtful conjecture." *

Previous to his decampment, Washington sent forward a party ot pioneers to clear the roads towards King's Bridge, as if the posts recently reconnoitered were about to be attempted. On the 19th of August, his troops were paraded with their faces in that direction. When all were ready, however, they were ordered to face about, and were marched up along the Hudson River towards King's Ferry.

De Rochambeau, in like manner, broke up his encampment, and took the road by White Plains, North Castle, Pine's Bridge, and Crompond, towards the same point.

* See Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 322.

All Westchester County was again alive with the tramp of troops, the gleam of arms, and the lumbering of artillery and baggage wagons along its roads.

On the 20th, Washington arrived at King's Ferry, and his troops began to cross the Hudson with their baggage, stores, and cannon, and encamp at Haverstraw. He himself crossed in the evening, and took up his quarters at Colonel Hay's, at the White House. Thence he wrote confidentially to Lafayette, on the 21st, now first apprising him of his being on the march with the expedition, and repeating his injunctions that the land and naval forces, already at the scene of action, should so combine their operations, that the English, on the arrival of the French fleet, might not be able to escape. He wrote also to the Count de Grasse (presuming that the letter would find him in the Chesapeake), urging him to send up all his frigates and transports to the Head of Elk, by the 8th of September, for the transportation of the combined army, which would be there by that time. He informed him also, that the Count de Barras had resolved to join him in the Chesapeake with his squadron. One is reminded of the tissue of movements planned from a distance, which ended in the capture of Burgoyne.

On the 22d, the French troops arrived by their circuitous route, and began to cross to Stony Point with their artillery, baggage, and stores. The operation occupied between two and three days; during which time Washington took the Count de Rochambeau on a visit to

West Point, to show him the citadel of the Highlands, an object of intense interest, in consequence of having been the scene of Arnold's treason.

The two armies having safely crossed the Hudson, commenced on the 25th, their several lines of march towards the Jerseys; the Americans for Springfield on the Rahway, the French for Whippany towards Trenton. Both armies were still kept in the dark as to the ultimate object of their movement. An intelligent observer, already quoted, who accompanied the army, writes: "Our situation reminds me of some theatrical exhibition, where the interest and expectations of the spectators are continually increasing, and where curiosity is wrought to the highest point. Our destination has been for some time matter of perplexing doubt and uncertainty; bets have run high on one side, that we were to occupy the ground marked out on the Jersey shore, to aid in the siege of New York; and on the other, that we are stealing a march on the enemy, and are actually destined to Virginia, in pursuit of the army under Cornwallis. . . . . A number of bateaux mounted on carriages have followed in our train; supposed for the purpose of conveying the troops over to Staten Island." *

The mystery was at length solved. "We have now passed all the enemy's posts," continues the foregoing writer. "and are pursuing our route, with increased

* Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 323.

rapidity, toward Philadelphia. Wagons have been prepared to carry the soldiers' packs, that they may press forward with greater facility. Our destination can no longer be a secret. Cornwallis is unquestionably the object of our present expedition. . . . . His Excellency, General Washington, having succeeded in a masterly piece of *generalship*, has now the satisfaction of leaving his adversary to ruminate on his own mortifying situation, and to anticipate the perilous fate which awaits his friend, Lord Cornwallis, in a different quarter." *

Washington had in fact reached the Delaware with his troops, before Sir Henry Clinton was aware of their destination. It was too late to oppose their march, even had his forces been adequate. As a kind of counterplot, therefore, and in the hope of distracting the attention of the American commander, and drawing off a part of his troops, he hurried off an expedition to the eastward, to insult the State of Connecticut, and attack her seaport of New London.

The command of this expedition, which was to be one of ravage and destruction, was given to Arnold, as if it

* Washington several years afterwards, speaking of this important march in a letter to Noah Webster, writes: "That much trouble was taken, and finesse used, to misguide and bewilder Sir Henry Clinton in regard to the real object, by fictitious communications, as well as by making a deceptive provision of ovens, forage, and boats in his neighborhood, is certain. Nor were less pains taken to deceive our own army, for I had always conceived where the imposition does not completely take place at home, it would never sufficiently succeed abroad."—Sparks, ix. 404.

was necessary to complete the measure of his infamy, that he should carry fire and sword into his native State, and desecrate the very cradle of his infancy.

On the 6th of September he appeared off the harbor of New London with a fleet of ships and transports and a force of two thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry; partly British troops, but a great part made up of American royalists and refugees, and Hessian yagers.

New London stands on the west bank of the river Thames. The approach to it was defended by two forts on opposite sides of the river, and about a mile below the town; Fort Trumbull on the west and Fort Griswold on the east side, on a height called Groton Hill. The troops landed in two divisions of about eight hundred men each; one under Lieutenant-colonel Eyre on the east side, the other under Arnold on the west, on the same side with New London, and about three miles below it. Arnold met with but little opposition. The few militia which manned an advance battery and Fort Trumbull, abandoned their posts, and crossed the river to Fort Griswold. He pushed on and took possession of the town.

Colonel Eyre had a harder task. The militia, about one hundred and fifty-seven strong, had collected in Fort Griswold, hastily and imperfectly armed it is true, some of them merely with spears, but they were brave men, and had a brave commander, Colonel William Ledyard, brother of the celebrated traveller. The fort was square and regularly built. Arnold, unaware of its strength, had

ordered Colonel Eyre to take it by a coup-de-main. He discovered his mistake, and sent counter-orders, but too late.

Colonel Eyre forced the pickets; made his way into the fosse, and attacked the fort on three sides; it was bravely defended; the enemy were repeatedly repulsed; they returned to the assault, scrambled up on each other's shoulders, effected a lodgment on the fraise, and made their way with fixed bayonets through the embrasures. Colonel Eyre received a mortal wound near the works; Major Montgomery took his place; a negro thrust him through with a spear as he mounted the parapet; Major Bromfield succeeded to the command, and carried the fort at the point of the bayonet. In fact, after the enemy were within the walls, the fighting was at an end and the slaughter commenced. Colonel Ledyard had ordered his men to lay down their arms; but the enemy, exasperated by the resistance they had experienced, and by the death of their officers, continued the deadly work of the musket and the bayonet. Colonel Ledyard, it is said, was thrust through with his own sword after yielding it up to Major Bromfield. Seventy of the garrison were slain, and thirty-five desperately wounded; and most of them after the fort had been taken. The massacre was chiefly perpetrated by the tories, refugees, and Hessians. Major Bromfield himself was a New Jersey loyalist. The rancor of such men against their patriot countrymen was always deadly. The loss of the enemy

was two officers and forty-six soldiers killed, and eight officers and one hundred and thirty-five soldiers wounded.

Arnold, in the meantime, had carried on the work of destruction at New London. Some of the American shipping had effected their escape up the river, but a number were burnt. Fire, too, was set to the public stores; it communicated to the dwelling-houses, and, in a little while, the whole place was wrapped in flames. The destruction was immense, not only of public but private property: many families once living in affluence were ruined and rendered homeless.

Having completed his ravage, Arnold retreated to his boats, leaving the town still burning. Alarm guns had roused the country; the traitor was pursued by the exasperated yeomanry; he escaped their well-merited vengeance, but several of his men were killed and wounded.

So ended his career of infamy in his native land; a land which had once delighted to honor him, but in which his name was never thenceforth to be pronounced without a malediction.

The expedition, while it added one more hateful and disgraceful incident to this unnatural war, failed of its main object. It had not diverted Washington from the grand object on which he had fixed his mind. On the 30th of August, he, with his suite, had arrived at Philadelphia about noon, and alighted at the city tavern amidst enthusiastic crowds, who welcomed him with acclamations, but wondered at the object of his visit. Dur-

ing his sojourn in the city he was hospitably entertained at the house of Mr. Morris, the patriotic financier. The greatest difficulty with which he had to contend in his present enterprise, was the want of funds, part of his troops not having received any pay for a long time, and having occasionally given evidence of great discontent. The service upon which they were going was disagreeable to the Northern regiments, and the *douceur* of a little hard money would have an effect, Washington thought, to put them into a proper temper. In this emergency he was accommodated by the Count de Rochambeau, with a loan of twenty thousand hard dollars, which Mr. Robert Morris engaged to repay by the 1st of October. This pecuniary pressure was relieved by the arrival in Boston, on the 25th of August, of Colonel John Laurens from his mission to France, bringing with him two and a half millions of livres in cash, being part of a subsidy of six millions of livres granted by the French king.

On the 2d of September the American troops passed through Philadelphia. Their line of march, including appendages and attendants, extended nearly two miles. The general officers and their staffs were well dressed and well mounted, and followed by servants and baggage. In the rear of every brigade were several field-pieces with ammunition wagons. The soldiers kept step to the sound of the drum and fife. In the rear followed a great number of wagons laden with tents, provisions, and baggage, beside a few soldiers' wives and children. The weather

was warm and dry. The troops as they marched raised a cloud of dust "like a smothering snow-storm," which almost blinded them. The begriming effect was especially mortifying to the campaigner whom we quote, "as ladies were viewing them from the windows of every house as they passed." Notwithstanding the dusty and somewhat ragged plight of the soldiery, however, they were cheered with enthusiasm by the populace, who hailed them as the war-worn defenders of the country.

The French troops entered on the following day, but in different style. Halting within a mile of the city they arranged their arms and accoutrements; brushed the dust off of their gay white uniforms faced with green, and then marched in with buoyant step and brilliant array to the swelling music of a military band. The streets were again thronged by the shouting populace. The windows were crowded with ladies; among whom probably were some of the beauties who had crowned the British knights in the chivalrous mime of the Mischianza, now ready to bestow smiles and wreaths on their Gallic rivals.

At Philadelphia Washington received despatches from Lafayette, dated the 21st and 24th of August, from his camp at the Forks of York River in Virginia. The embarkation at Portsmouth, which the marquis had supposed might be intended for New York, was merely for Yorktown, where Cornwallis had determined to establish the permanent post ordered in his instructions.

Yorktown was a small place situated on a projecting bank on the south side of York River, opposite a promontory called Gloucester Point. The river between was not more than a mile wide, but deep enough to admit ships of a large size and burthen. Here concentrating his forces, he had proceeded to fortify the opposite points, calculating to have the works finished by the beginning of October; at which time Sir Henry Clinton intended to recommence operations on the Chesapeake. Believing that he had no present enemy but Lafayette to guard against, Cornwallis felt so secure in his position, that he wrote to Sir Henry on the 22d of August, offering to detach a thousand or twelve hundred men to strengthen New York against the apprehended attack of the combined armies.

While Cornwallis, undervaluing his youthful adversary, felt thus secure, Lafayette, in conformity to the instructions of Washington, was taking measures to cut off any retreat by land which his lordship might attempt on the arrival of De Grasse. With this view he called upon General Thomas Nelson, the Governor of Virginia, for six hundred of the militia to be collected upon Blackwater; detached troops to the south of James River, under pretext of a design to dislodge the British from Portsmouth, and requested General Wayne to move southward, to be ready to cross James River at Westover.

As to himself, Lafayette was prepared, as soon as he

should hear of the arrival of De Grasse, to march at once to Williamsburg and form a junction with the troops which were to be landed from the fleet. Thus a net was quietly drawn round Cornwallis by the youthful general, while the veteran felt himself so secure that he was talking of detaching troops to New York.

Lafayette, at the time of writing his despatches, was ignorant that Washington had taken command of the expedition coming to his aid, and expressed an affectionate solicitude on the subject. "In the present state of affairs, my dear general," writes he, "I hope you will come yourself to Virginia, and that, if the French army moves this way, I will have at least the satisfaction of beholding you, myself, at the head of the combined armies." In concluding his letter, he writes: "Adieu, my dear general. I heartily thank you for having ordered me to remain in Virginia; and to your goodness to me I am owing the most beautiful prospect I may ever behold."

The letter of Lafayette gave no account of the Count de Grasse, and Washington expressed himself distressed beyond measure to know what had become of that commander. He had heard of an English fleet at sea steering for the Chesapeake, and feared it might arrive and frustrate all the flattering prospects in that quarter. Still, as usual, he looked to the bright side. "Of many contingencies," writes he, "we will hope for the most propitious events. Should the retreat of Lord Cornwallis by water be cut off by the arrival of either of the

French fleets, I am persuaded you will do all in your power to prevent his escape by land. May that great felicity be reserved for you."

Washington left Philadelphia on the 5th of September on his way to the Head of Elk. About three miles below Chester, he was met by an express bearing tidings of the arrival of the Count de Grasse in the Chesapeake with twenty-eight ships of the line. Washington instantly rode back to Chester to rejoice with the Count de Rochambeau, who was coming down to that place from Philadelphia by water. They had a joyous dinner together, after which Washington proceeded in the evening on his destination.

The express meantime reached Philadelphia most opportunely. There had been a grand review of the French troops, at which the President of Congress and all the fashion of the city were present. It was followed by a banquet given to the officers by the French Minister, the Chevalier de Luzerne. Scarce were the company seated at table, when despatches came announcing the arrival of De Grasse and the landing of three thousand troops under the Marquis St. Simon, who, it was added, had opened a communication with Lafayette.

All now was mutual gratulation at the banquet. The news soon went forth and spread throughout the city. Acclamations were to be heard on all sides, and crowds assembling before the house of the French Minister rent the air with hearty huzzas for Louis the Sixteenth.

Washington reached the Head of Elk on the 6th. The troops and a great part of the stores were already arrived, and beginning to embark. Thence he wrote to the Count De Grasse, felicitating him on his arrival; and informing him that the van of the two armies were about to embark and fall down the Chesapeake, form a junction with the troops under the Count de St. Simon and the Marquis de Lafayette, and coöperate in blocking up Cornwallis in York River, so as to prevent his retreat by land or his getting any supplies from the country. "As it will be of the greatest importance," writes he, "to prevent the escape of his lordship from his present position, I am persuaded that every measure which prudence can dictate will be adopted for that purpose, until the arrival of our complete force, when I hope his lordship will be compelled to yield his ground to the superior power of our combined forces."

Everything had thus far gone on well, but there were not vessels enough at the Head of Elk for the immediate transportation of all the troops, ordnance, and stores; a part of the troops would have to proceed to Baltimore by land. Leaving General Heath to bring on the American forces, and the Baron de Viomenil the French, Washington, accompanied by De Rochambeau, crossed the Susquehanna early on the 8th, and pushed forward for Baltimore. He was met by a deputation of the citizens, who made him a public address, to which he replied, and his arrival was celebrated in the evening with illuminations.

On the 9th he left Baltimore a little after daybreak, accompanied only by Colonel Humphreys; the rest of his suite were to follow at their ease; for himself, he was determined to reach Mount Vernon that evening. Six years had elapsed since last he was under its roof; six wearing years of toil, of danger, and of constant anxiety. During all that time, and amid all his military cares, he had kept up a regular weekly correspondence with his steward or agent, regulating all the affairs of his rural establishment with as much exactness as he did those of the army.

It was a late hour when he arrived at Mount Vernon; where he was joined by his suite at dinner-time on the following day, and by the Count de Rochambeau in the evening. General Chastellux and his aides-de-camp arrived there on the 11th, and Mount Vernon was now crowded with guests, who were all entertained in the ample style of old Virginian hospitality. On the 12th, tearing himself away once more from the home of his heart, Washington with his military associates continued onward to join Lafayette at Williamsburg.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CORNWALLIS AROUSED TO HIS DANGER.—HIS RETREAT TO THE CAROLINAS CUT OFF.—STRENGTHENS HIS WORKS.—ACTION BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND BRITISH FLEETS.—WASHINGTON AND DE ROCHAMBEAU VISIT THE FRENCH FLEET.—OPERATIONS BEFORE YORKTOWN.

LORD CORNWALLIS had been completely roused from his dream of security by the appearance, on the 28th of August, of the fleet of Count de Grasse within the Capes of the Delaware. Three French ships of the line and a frigate soon anchored at the mouth of York River. The boats of the fleet were immediately busy conveying three thousand three hundred land forces, under the Marquis de St. Simon, up James River to form the preconcerted junction with those under Lafayette.

Awakened to his danger, Cornwallis, as Washington had foreseen, meditated a retreat to the Carolinas. It was too late. York River was blocked up by French ships; James River was filled with armed vessels covering the transportation of the troops. His lordship reconnoitered Williamsburg; it was too strong to be forced, and Wayne had crossed James River to join his troops to

those under the marquis. Seeing his retreat cut off in every direction, Cornwallis proceeded to strengthen his works: sending off repeated expresses to apprise Sir Henry Clinton of his perilous situation.

The Count de Grasse, eager to return to the West Indies, urged Lafayette to make an immediate attack upon the British army, with the American and French troops under his command, without waiting for the combined force under Washington and Rochambeau, offering to aid him with marines and sailors from the ships. The admiral was seconded by the Marquis de St. Simon. They represented that the works at Yorktown were yet incomplete; and that that place and Gloucester, immediately opposite, might be carried by storm by their superior force. It was a brilliant achievement which they held out to tempt the youthful commander, but he remained undazzled. He would not, for the sake of personal distinction, lavish the lives of the brave men confided to him; but would await the arrival of the combined forces, when success might be attained with little loss, and would leave to Washington the *coup de grace;* in all probability the closing triumph of the war.

The Count de Grasse had been but a few days anchored within the Chesapeake, and fifteen hundred of his seamen were absent, conveying the troops up James River, when Admiral Graves, who then commanded the British naval force on the American coast, appeared with twenty sail off the capes of Virginia. De Grasse, anxious to protect

the squadron of the Count de Barras, which was expected from Rhode Island, and which it was the object of Graves to intercept, immediately slipped his cables and put to sea with twenty-four ships, leaving the rest to blockade York and James Rivers.

Washington received information of the sailing of the fleet from the capes, shortly after his departure from Mount Vernon, and instantly despatched missives, ordering the troops who were embarked at the Head of Elk to stop until the receipt of further intelligence, fearing that the navigation in Chesapeake Bay might not be secure. For two days he remained in anxious uncertainty, until, at Bowling Green, he was relieved by favorable rumors concerning the fleet, which were confirmed on his arriving at Williamsburg on the evening of the 14th.

Admiral Graves, it appeared, on the sallying forth of the French fleet, immediately prepared for action, although he had five ships less than De Grasse. The latter, however, was not disposed to accept the challenge, his force being weakened by the absence of so many of his seamen, employed in transporting troops. His plan was to occupy the enemy by partial actions and skillful manœuvres, so as to retain his possession of the Chesapeake, and cover the arrival of De Barras.

The vans of the two fleets, and some ships of the centre, engaged about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 7th of September. The conflict soon became animated.

Several ships were damaged, and many men killed and wounded on both sides.

De Grasse, who had the advantage of the wind, drew off after sunset; satisfied with the damage done and sustained, and not disposed for a general action; nor was the British admiral inclined to push the engagement so near night, and on a hostile coast. Among his ships that had suffered, one had been so severely handled, that she was no longer seaworthy, and had to be burnt. For four days the fleets remained in sight of each other, repairing damages and manœuvring; but the French having still the advantage of the wind, maintained their prudent policy of avoiding a general engagement. At length De Grasse, learning that De Barras was arrived within the capes, formed a junction with him, and returned with him to his former anchoring ground, with two English frigates which he had captured. Admiral Graves, disappointed in his hope of intercepting De Barras, and finding the Chesapeake guarded by a superior force with which he could not prudently contend; having, moreover, to encounter the autumnal gales in the battered state of several of his ships, left the coast and bore away for New York. Under convoy of the squadron of De Barras came a fleet of transports, conveying land forces under M. de Choisy, with siege artillery and military stores. It should be mentioned to the credit of De Barras, that, in his orders from the French minister of marine to come to America, he was left at liberty to make a

cruise on the banks of Newfoundland, so as not to be obliged to serve under De Grasse, who was his inferior in rank, but whom the minister wished to continue in the command. "But De Barras," writes Lafayette, "nobly took the part of conducting, himself, the artillery from Rhode Island, and of coming with all his vessels and placing himself under the orders of an admiral his junior in service." *

From Williamsburg, Washington sent forward Count Fersen, one of the aides-de-camp of De Rochambeau, to hurry on the French troops with all possible despatch. He wrote to the same purport to General Lincoln; "Every day we now lose," said he, "is comparatively an age; as soon as it is in our power with safety, we ought to take our position near the enemy. Hurry on, then, my dear sir, with your troops, on the wings of speed. The want of our men and stores is now all that retards our immediate operations. Lord Cornwallis is improving every moment to the best advantage; and every day that is given him to make his preparations may cost us many lives to encounter them."

It was with great satisfaction Washington learned that Admiral de Barras had anticipated his wishes, in sending transports and prize vessels up the bay to assist in bringing on the French troops. In the meantime he with Count de Rochambeau was desirous of having an inter-

* *Memoirs of Lafayette*, tom. i. p. 467.

view with the admiral on board of his ship, provided he could send some fast-sailing cutter to receive them. A small ship, the *Queen Charlotte*, was furnished by the admiral for the purpose. It had been captured on its voyage from Charleston to New York, having Lord Rawdon on board, and had been commodiously fitted up for his lordship's reception.

On board of this vessel Washington and De Rochambeau, with the Chevalier de Chastellux and Generals Knox and Duportail, embarked on the 18th, and proceeding down James River, came the next morning in sight of the French fleet riding at anchor in Lynn Haven Bay, just under the point of Cape Henry. About noon they got alongside of the admiral's ship, the *Ville de Paris*, and were received on board with great ceremony, and naval and military parade. Admiral de Grasse was a tall, fine-looking man, plain in his address and prompt in the discharge of business. A plan of coöperation was soon arranged, to be carried into effect on the arrival of the American and French armies from the North, which were actually on their way down the Chesapeake from the Head of Elk. Business being despatched, dinner was served, after which they were conducted throughout the ship, and received the visits of the officers of the fleet, almost all of whom came on board.

About sunset Washington and his companions took their leave of the admiral, and returned on board of their own little ship; when the yards of all the ships of the

fleet were manned, and a parting salute was thundered from the *Ville de Paris*. Owing to storms and contrary winds, and other adverse circumstances, the party did not reach Williamsburg until the 22d, when intelligence was received that threatened to disconcert all the plans formed in the recent council on board ship. Admiral Digby, it appeared, had arrived in New York with six ships of the line and a reinforcement of troops. This intelligence Washington instantly transmitted to the Count de Grasse by one of the Count de Rochambeau's aides-de-camp. De Grasse in reply expressed great concern, observing that the position of affairs was changed by the arrival of Digby. "The enemy," writes he, "is now nearly equal to us in strength, and it would be imprudent in me to place myself in a situation that would prevent my attacking them should they attempt to afford succor." He proposed, therefore, to leave two vessels at the mouth of York River, and the corvettes and frigates in James River, which, with the French troops on shore, would be sufficient assistance; and to put to sea with the rest, either to intercept the enemy and fight them where there was good sea-room, or to blockade them in New York should they not have sailed.

On reading this letter, Washington dreaded that the present plan of coöperation might likewise fall through, and the fruits of all his schemes and combinations be lost when within his reach. With the assistance of the fleet the reduction of Yorktown was demonstrably cer-

tain, and the surrender of the garrison must go far to terminate the war; whereas the departure of the ships, by leaving an opening for succor to the enemy, might frustrate these brilliant prospects and involve the whole enterprise in ruin and disgrace. Even a momentary absence of the French fleet might enable Cornwallis to evacuate Yorktown and effect a retreat, with the loss merely of his baggage and artillery, and perhaps a few soldiers. These and other considerations were urged in a letter to the count, remonstrating against his putting to sea. Lafayette was the bearer of the letter, and seconded it with so many particulars respecting the situation of the armies, and argued the case so earnestly and eloquently, that the count consented to remain. It was, furthermore, determined in a council of war of his officers, that a large part of the fleet should anchor in York River; four or five vessels be stationed so as to pass up and down James River, and a battery for cannon and mortars be erected with the aid of the allied troops on Point Comfort.

By the 25th the American and French troops were mostly arrived and encamped near Williamsburg, and preparations were made for the decisive blow.

Yorktown, as has already been noted, is situated on the south side of York River, immediately opposite Gloucester Point. Cornwallis had fortified the town with seven redoubts and six batteries on the land side connected by intrenchments; and there was a line of

batteries along the river. The town was flanked on each side by deep ravines and creeks emptying into York River; their heads in front of the town, being not more than half a mile apart. The enemy had availed themselves of these natural defenses, in the arrangement of extensive outworks, with redoubts strengthened by abatis; field-works mounted with cannon, and trees cut down and left with the branches pointed outward.

Gloucester Point had likewise been fortified—its batteries, with those of Yorktown, commanding the intervening river. Ships of war were likewise stationed on it, protected by the guns of the forts, and the channel was obstructed by sunken vessels.

The defense of Gloucester Point was confided to Lieutenant-colonel Dundas, with six or seven hundred men. The enemy's main army was encamped about Yorktown, within the range of the outer redoubts and field-works.

Washington and his staff bivouacked that night on the ground in the open air. He slept under a mulberry tree, the root serving for his pillow. On the following morning the two armies drew out on each side of Beaver Dam Creek. The Americans, forming the right wing, took station on the east side of the creek; the French, forming the left wing, on the west.

That evening Cornwallis received despatches from Sir Henry Clinton, informing him of the arrival of Admiral Digby, and that a fleet of twenty-three ships of the line, with about five thousand troops, would sail to his assist-

ance probably on the 5th of October. A heavy firing would be made by them on arriving at the entrance of the Chesapeake. On hearing it, if all went on well at Yorktown, his lordship was to make three separate columns of smoke; and four, should he still possess the post at Gloucester Point.

Cornwallis immediately wrote in reply; "I have ventured these last two days to look General Washington's whole force in the face in the position on the outside of my works, and have the pleasure to assure your Excellency, that there is but one wish throughout the army, which is that the enemy would advance. . . . . I shall retire this night within the works, and have no doubt, if relief arrives in any reasonable time, York and Gloucester will be both in the possession of His Majesty's troops. I believe your Excellency must depend more on the sound of our cannon than the signal of smokes for information; however, I will attempt it on the Gloucester side." *

That night his lordship accordingly abandoned his outworks, and drew his troops within the town; a measure strongly censured by Tarleton in his Commentaries as premature; as cooping up the troops in narrow quarters, and giving up a means of disputing, inch by inch, the approaches of the besiegers, and thus gaining time to complete the fortifications of the town.

* *Correspondence relative to Defense of York*, p. 199.

The outworks thus abandoned were seized upon the next morning by detachments of American light infantry and French troops, and served to cover the troops employed in throwing up breastworks. Colonel Alexander Scammel, officer of the day, while reconnoitering the ground abandoned by the enemy, was set upon by a party of Hessian troopers. He attempted to escape, but was wounded, captured, and carried off to Yorktown. Washington, to whom he had formerly acted as aide-de-camp, interested himself in his favor, and at his request Cornwallis permitted him to be removed to Williamsburg, where he died in the course of a few days. He was an officer of much merit, and his death was deeply regretted by Washington and the army.

The combined French and American forces were now twelve thousand strong, exclusive of the Virginia militia which Governor Nelson had brought into the field. An instance of patriotic self-devotion on the part of this functionary is worthy of special record. The treasury of Virginia was empty; the governor, fearful that the militia would disband for want of pay, had endeavored to procure a loan from a wealthy individual on the credit of the State. In the precarious situation of affairs, the guarantee was not deemed sufficient. The governor pledged his own property, and obtained the loan at his individual risk.

On the morning of the 28th of September, the combined armies marched from Williamsburg toward York-

town, about twelve miles distant, and encamped at night within two miles of it, driving in the pickets and some patrols of cavalry. General de Choisy was sent across York River, with Lauzun's legion and General Weedon's brigade of militia, to watch the enemy on the side of Gloucester Point.

By the first of October the line of the besiegers, nearly two miles from the works, formed a semicircle, each end resting on the river, so that the investment by land was complete; while the Count de Grasse, with the main fleet, remained in Lynn Haven Bay, to keep off assistance by sea.

About this time the Americans threw up two redoubts in the night, which, on being discovered in the morning, were severely cannonaded. Three of the men were killed and several severely wounded. While Washington was superintending the works, a shot struck the ground close by him, throwing up a cloud of dust. The Rev. Mr. Evans, chaplain in the army, who was standing by him, was greatly agitated. Taking off his hat and showing it covered with sand, "See here, General," exclaimed he. "Mr. Evans," said Washington with grave pleasantry, "you had better carry that home, and show it to your wife and children." *

The besieged army began now to be greatly distressed for want of forage, and had to kill many of their horses,

* Thacher's *Military Journal*, p. 336.

the carcasses of which were continually floating down the river. In the evening of the 2d of October, Tarleton with his legion and the mounted infantry were passed over the river to Gloucester Point, to assist in foraging. At day-break Lieutenant-colonel Dundas led out part of his garrison to forage the neighboring country. About ten o'clock the wagons and bat horses laden with Indian corn were returning, covered by a party of infantry, with Tarleton and his dragoons as a rear-guard. The wagons and infantry had nearly reached York River, when word was brought that an enemy was advancing in force. The report was confirmed by a cloud of dust, from which emerged Lauzun and the French hussars and lancers.

Tarleton, with part of his legion, advanced to meet them; the rest, with Simcoe's dragoons, remained as a rear-guard in a skirt of woods. A skirmish ensued, gallantly sustained on each side, but the superiority of Tarleton's horses gave him the advantage. General Choisy hastened up with a corps of cavalry and infantry to support the hussars. In the medley fight, a dragoon's horse, wounded by a lance, plunged, and overthrew both Tarleton and his steed. The rear-guard rushed from their covert to rescue their commander. They came galloping up in such disorder, that they were roughly received by Lauzun's hussars, who were drawn up on the plain. In the meantime Tarleton scrambled out of the mêlée, mounted another horse, and ordered a retreat, to enable his men to recover from their confusion. Dismounting

forty infantry, he placed them in a thicket. Their fire checked the hussars in their pursuit. The British dragoons rallied, and were about to charge; when the hussars retired behind their infantry; and a fire was opened upon the British by some militia from behind a fence. Tarleton again ordered a retreat to be sounded, and the conflict came to an end. The loss of the British in killed and wounded was one officer and eleven men; that of the French two officers and fourteen hussars. This was the last affair of Tarleton and his legion in the Revolutionary War.

The next day General Choisy, being reinforced by a detachment of marines from the fleet of De Grasse, cut off all communication by land between Gloucester and the country.

At this momentous time, when the first parallel before the besieged city was about to be opened, Washington received despatches from his faithful coadjutor, General Greene, giving him important intelligence of his coöperations in the South; to consider which we will suspend for a moment our narrative of affairs before Yorktown.

CHAPTER XXVII.

GREENE ON THE HIGH HILLS OF SANTEE.—THE ENEMY HARASSED.—GREENE MARCHES AGAINST STUART.—BATTLE NEAR EUTAW SPRINGS.

FOR some weeks in the months of July and August, General Greene had remained encamped with his main force on the high hills of Santee, refreshing and disciplining his men, and awaiting the arrival of promised reinforcements. He was constantly looking to Washington as his polar star by which to steer, and feared despatches from him had been intercepted. "I wait with impatience for intelligence," said he, "by which I mean to govern my own operations. If things are flattering in the North, I will hazard less in the South; but, if otherwise there, we must risk more here." In the meantime, Marion with his light troops, aided by Colonel Washington with his dragoons, held control over the lower Santee. Lee was detached to operate with Sumter's brigade on the Congaree, and Colonel Harden with his mounted militia was scouring the country about the Edisto. The enemy was thus harassed in every quarter; their convoys and foraging parties waylaid, and Stuart was obliged to obtain all his supplies from below.

Greene was disappointed as to reinforcements All that he received were two hundred North Carolina levies and five hundred South Carolina militia; still he prepared for a bold effort to drive the enemy from their remaining posts. For that purpose, on the 22d of August he broke up his encampment on the "benign hills of Santee," to march against Colonel Stuart. The latter still lay encamped about sixteen miles distant in a straight line; but the Congaree and Wateree lay between, bordered by swamps overflowed by recent rains; to cross them and reach the hostile camp, it was necessary to make a circuit of seventy miles. While Greene was making it, Stuart abandoned his position, and moved down forty miles to the vicinity of Eutaw Springs, where he was reinforced by a detachment from Charleston with provisions.

Greene followed on by easy marches. He had been joined by General Pickens with a party of the Ninety-Six militia, and by the State troops under Lieutenant-colonel Henderson; and now moved slowly to give time for Marion, who was scouring the country about the Edisto, to rejoin him. This was done on the 5th of September at Laurens' place, within seventeen miles of Stuart's camp. Here baggage, tents, everything that could impede motion, was left behind, and on the afternoon of the 7th the army was pushed on within seven miles of the Eutaws, where it bivouacked for the night, Greene lying on the ground wrapped in his cloak, with the root of a tree for a pillow.

At four o'clock in the morning his little army was in motion. His whole force at that time did not exceed two thousand men; that of the enemy he was seeking, about twenty-three hundred. The Americans, however, were superior in cavalry. Owing to the difficulty of receiving information, and the country being covered with forests, the enemy were not aware of Greene's approach until he was close upon them.

His army advanced in two columns, which were to form the two lines of battle. The first column, commanded by General Marion, was composed of two battalions of North and two of South Carolina militia. The second column of three brigades; one of North Carolina, one of Virginia, and one of Maryland continental troops. Colonel Lee with his legion covered the right flank, Colonel Henderson the left. Colonel Washington, with his dragoons and the Delaware troops, formed the reserve. Each column had two field-pieces.

Within four miles of Eutaw they met with a British detachment of one hundred and fifty infantry and fifty cavalry under Major Coffin, sent forward to reconnoiter; it was put to flight after a severe skirmish, in which a number were killed and wounded, and several taken prisoners. Supposing this to be the van of the enemy, Greene halted his columns and formed. The South Carolinians in equal divisions formed the right and left of the first line, the North Carolinians the centre. General Marion commanded the right; General Pickens, the

left; Colonel Malmedy, the centre. Colonel Henderson with the State troops covered the left of the line; Colonel Lee with his legion, the right.

Of the second line, composed of regulars, the North Carolinians, under General Sumner, were on the right; the Marylanders, under Colonel Williams, on the left; the Virginians, under Colonel Campbell, in the centre.

Colonel Washington with his cavalry followed in the rear as a *corps de reserve*.

Two three-pounders moved on the road in the centre of the first line. Two six-pounders in a like position in the second line.

In this order the troops moved forward, keeping their lines as well as they could through open woods, which covered the country on each side of the road.

Within a mile of the camp they encountered a body of infantry thrown forward by Colonel Stuart, to check their advance while he had time to form his troops in order of battle. These were drawn up in line in a wood two hundred yards west of Eutaw Springs. The right rested on Eutaw Creek (or brook), and was covered by a battalion of grenadiers and infantry under Major Majoribanks, partly concealed among thickets on the margin of the stream. The left of the line extended across the Charleston road, with a reserve corps in a commanding situation covering the road. About fifty yards in the rear of the British line was a cleared field, in which was their encampment, with the tents all standing. Adjoining it was

a brick house with a palisadoed garden which Colonel Stuart intended as a protection, if too much pressed by cavalry.

The advanced party of infantry, which had retired firing before the Americans, formed on the flanks of Colonel Stuart's line. The Carolinian militia had pressed after them. About nine o'clock the action was commenced by the left of the American line, and soon became general. The militia fought for a time with the spirit and firmness of regulars. Their two field-pieces were dismounted; so was one of the enemy's; and there was great carnage on both sides. The militia fought until they had expended seventeen rounds, when they gave way, covered by Lee and Henderson, who fought bravely on the flanks on the line.

Sumner, with the regulars who formed the second line, advanced in fine style to take the place of the first. The enemy likewise brought their reserve into action; the conflict continued to be bloody and severe. Colonel Henderson, who commanded the State troops in the second line, was severely wounded; this caused some confusion. Sumner's brigade, formed partly of recruits, gave way under the superior fire of the enemy. The British rushed forward to secure their fancied victory. Greene, seeing their line disordered, instantly ordered Williams with his Marylanders to "sweep the field with the bayonet." Williams was seconded by Colonel Campbell with the Virginians. The order was gallantly obeyed. They deliv-

ered a deadly volley at forty yards' distance, and then advanced at a brisk rate, with loud shouts and trailed arms, prepared to make the deadly thrust. The British recoiled. While the Marylanders and Virginians attacked them in front, Lee with his legion turned their left flank and charged them in rear. Colonel Hampton with the State cavalry made a great number of prisoners, and Colonel Washington, coming up with his reserve of horse and foot, completed their defeat. They were driven back through their camp; many were captured; many fled along the Charleston road, and others threw themselves into the brick house.

Major Majoribanks and his troops could still enfilade the left flank of the Americans from their covert among the thickets on the border of the stream. Greene ordered Colonel Washington with his dragoons and Kirkwood's Delaware infantry to dislodge them, and Colonel Wade Hampton to assist with the State troops. Colonel Washington, without waiting for the infantry, dashed forward with his dragoons. It was a rash move. The thickets were impervious to cavalry. The dragoons separated into small squads, and endeavored to force their way in. Horses and riders were shot down or bayoneted; most of the officers were either killed or wounded. Colonel Washington had his horse shot under him; he himself was bayoneted, and would have been slain, had not a British officer interposed, who took him prisoner.

By the time Hampton and Kirkwood came up, the cavalry were routed; the ground was strewed with the dead and the wounded; horses were plunging and struggling in the agonies of death; others were galloping about without their riders. While Hampton rallied the scattered cavalry, Kirkwood with his Delawares charged with bayonets upon the enemy in the thicket. Majoribanks fell back with his troops and made a stand in the palisadoed garden of the brick house.

Victory now seemed certain on the side of the Americans. They had driven the British from the field, and had taken possession of their camp; unfortunately, the soldiers, thinking the day their own, fell to plundering the tents, devouring the food and carousing on the liquors found there. Many of them became intoxicated and unmanageable—the officers interfered in vain; all was riot and disorder.

The enemy in the meantime recovered from their confusion and opened a fire from every window of the house and from the palisadoed garden. There was a scattering fire also from the woods and thickets on the right and left. Four cannon, one of which had been captured from the enemy, were now advanced by the Americans to batter the house. The fire from the windows was so severe, that most of the officers and men who served the cannon were either killed or wounded. Greene ordered the survivors to retire; they did so, leaving the cannon behind.

Colonel Stuart was by this time rallying his left wing, and advancing to support the right; when Greene, finding his ammunition nearly exhausted, determined to give up the attempt to dislodge the enemy from their places of refuge, since he could not do it without severe loss; whereas the enemy could maintain their posts but a few hours, and he should have a better opportunity of attacking them on their retreat.

He remained on the ground long enough to collect his wounded, excepting those who were too much under the fire of the house, and then, leaving Colonel Hampton with a strong picket on the field, he returned to the position seven miles off which he had left in the morning; not finding water anywhere nearer.

The enemy decamped in the night, after destroying a large quantity of provisions, staving many barrels of rum, and breaking upwards of a thousand stand of arms which they threw into the springs of the Eutaw; they left behind also seventy of their wounded who might have impeded the celerity of their retreat. Their loss in killed, wounded, and captured, in this action, was six hundred and thirty-three, of whom five hundred were prisoners in the hands of the Americans; the loss sustained, by the latter in killed, wounded, and missing, was five hundred and thirty-five. One of the slain most deplored was Colonel Campbell, who had so bravely led on the Virginians. He fell in the shock of the charge with the bayonet. It was a glorious close of a gallant career. In

his dying moments he was told of the defeat of the enemy, and is said to have uttered the celebrated ejaculation of General Wolfe, "I die contented."

In the morning, General Greene, who knew not that the enemy had decamped, detached Lee and Marion to scour the country between Eutaw Springs and Charleston, to intercept any reinforcements which might be coming to Colonel Stuart, and to retard the march of the latter should he be retreating. Stuart, however, had met with reinforcements about fourteen miles from Eutaw, but continued his retreat to Monk's Corner, within twenty-five miles of Charleston.

Greene, when informed of the retreat, had followed with his main force almost to Monk's Corner; finding the number and position of the enemy too strong to be attacked with prudence, he fell back to Eutaw, where he remained a day or two to rest his troops, and then returned by easy marches to his old position near the heights of Santee.

Thence, as usual, he despatched an account of affairs to Washington. "Since I wrote to you before, we have had a most bloody battle. It was by far the most obstinate fight I ever saw. Victory was ours; and had it not been for one of those little incidents which frequently happen in the progress of war, we should have taken the whole British army. . . . . I am trying to collect a body of militia to oppose Lord Cornwallis should he attempt to escape through North Carolina to Charleston. Charles-

ton itself may be reduced, if you will bend your forces this way, and it will give me great pleasure to join your Excellency in the attempt; for I shall be equally happy, whether as a principal or subordinate, so that the public good is promoted."

Such was the purport of the intelligence received from Greene. Washington considered the affair at Eutaw Springs a victory, and sent Greene his congratulations. "Fortune," writes he, "must have been coy indeed, had she not yielded at last to so persevering a pursuer as you have been."

"I can say with sincerity, that I feel with the highest degree of pleasure the good effects which you mention as resulting from the perfect good understanding between you, the marquis, and myself. I hope it will never be interrupted, and I am sure it never can be while we are all influenced by the same pure motive, that of love to our country and interest in the cause in which we are embarked."

We will now resume our narrative of the siege of Yorktown.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SIEGE AND SURRENDER OF YORKTOWN.

GENERAL LINCOLN had the honor, on the night of the 6th of October, 1781, of opening the first parallel before Yorktown. It was within six hundred yards of the enemy; nearly two miles in extent, and the foundations were laid for two redoubts. He had under him a large detachment of French and American troops, and the work was conducted with such silence and secrecy in a night of extreme darkness, that the enemy were not aware of it until daylight. A severe cannonade was then opened from the fortifications; but the men were under cover and continued working — the greatest emulation and good-will prevailing between the officers and soldiers of the allied armies thus engaged.

By the afternoon of the 9th the parallel was completed, and two or three batteries were ready to fire upon the town. "General Washington put the match to the first gun," says an observer who was present; "a furious discharge of cannon and mortars immediately

followed, and Earl Cornwallis received his first salutation." *

Governor Nelson, who had so nobly pledged his own property to raise funds for the public service, gave another proof of his self-sacrificing patriotism on this occasion. He was asked which part of the town could be most effectively cannonaded. He pointed to a large handsome house on a rising ground as the probable head-quarters of the enemy. It proved to be his own.†

The governor had an uncle in the town, very old, and afflicted with the gout. He had been for thirty years secretary under the royal colonial government, and was still called Mr. Secretary Nelson. He had taken no part in the Revolution, unfitted, perhaps, for the struggle, by his advanced age and his infirmities; and had remained in Yorktown when taken possession of by the English, not having any personal enmity to apprehend from them. He had two sons in Washington's army, who now were in the utmost alarm for his safety. At their request Washington sent in a flag, desiring that their father might be permitted to leave the place. "I was a witness," writes the Count de Chastellux in his memoirs, "of the cruel anxiety of one of those young men, as he kept his eyes fixed upon the gate of the town by which the flag would come out. It seemed as if he were awaiting his own sentence in the reply that was to be received.

* Thacher's *Military Journal.*

† Given on the authority of Lafayette. Sparks, viii. 201.

Lord Cornwallis had not the inhumanity to refuse so just a request."

The appearance of the venerable secretary, his stately person, noble countenance, and gray hairs, commanded respect and veneration. "I can never recall without emotion," writes the susceptible count, "his arrival at the head-quarters of General Washington. He was seated, his attack of the gout still continuing, and while we stood around him, he related with a serene visage what had been the effect of our batteries." *

His house had received some of the first shots; one of his negroes had been killed, and the head-quarters of Lord Cornwallis had been so battered, that he had been driven out of them.

The cannonade was kept up almost incessantly for three or four days from the batteries above mentioned, and from three others managed by the French. "Being in the trenches every other night and day," writes an observer already quoted,† "I have a fine opportunity of witnessing the sublime and stupendous scene which is continually exhibiting. The bomb-shells from the besiegers and the besieged are incessantly crossing each other's path in the air. They are clearly visible in the form of a black ball in the day, but in the night they appear like a fiery meteor with a blazing tail, most beautifully brilliant, ascending majestically from the mortar

* Chastellux, vol. ii. pp. 19–83.

† Thacher.

to a certain altitude, and gradually descending to the spot where they are destined to execute their work of destruction. When a shell falls, it whirls round, burrows and excavates the earth to a considerable extent, and, bursting, makes dreadful havoc around." "Some of our shells, over-reaching the town, are seen to fall into the river, and bursting, throw up columns of water like the spouting monsters of the deep."

The half-finished works of the enemy suffered severely, the guns were dismounted or silenced, and many men killed. The red-hot shot from the French batteries north-west of the town reached the English shipping. The Charon, a forty-four gunship, and three large transports, were set on fire by them. The flames ran up the rigging to the tops of the masts. The conflagration, seen in the darkness of the night, with the accompanying flash and thundering of cannon, and soaring and bursting of shells, and the tremendous explosions of the ships, all presented a scene of mingled magnificence and horror.

On the night of the 11th the second parallel was opened by the Baron Steuben's division, within three hundred yards of the works. The British now made new embrasures, and for two or three days kept up a galling fire upon those at work. The latter were still more annoyed by the flanking fire of two redoubts three hundred yards in front of the British works. As they enfiladed the entrenchments, and were supposed also to command

the communication between Yorktown and Gloucester, it was resolved to storm them both, on the night of the 14th; the one nearest the river by a detachment of Americans commanded by Lafayette; the other by a French detachment led by the Baron de Viomenil. The grenadiers of the regiment of Gatinais were to be at the head of the French detachment. This regiment had been formed out of that of Auvergne, of which De Rochambeau had been colonel, and which, by its brave and honorable conduct, had won the appellation of the regiment *D'Auvergne sans tache* (Auvergne without a stain). When De Rochambeau assigned the Gatinais grenadiers their post in the attack, he addressed to them a few soldier-like words. "My lads, I have need of you this night, and hope you will not forget that we have served together in that brave regiment of Auvergne sans tache." They instantly replied, that if he would promise to get their old name restored to them, they would sacrifice themselves to the last man. The promise was given.

In the arrangement for the American assault, Lafayette had given the honor of leading the advance to his own aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-colonel Gimat. This instantly touched the military pride of Hamilton, who exclaimed against it as an unjust preference, it being his tour of duty. The marquis excused himself by alleging the arrangement had been sanctioned by the commander-in-chief, and could not be changed by him. Hamilton forthwith made a spirited appeal by letter to Washington.

The latter, who was ignorant of the circumstances of the case, sent for the marquis, and, finding that it really was Hamilton's tour of duty, directed that he should be reinstated in it, which was done.* It was therefore arranged that Colonel Gimat's battalion should lead the van, and be followed by that of Hamilton, and that the latter should command the whole advanced corps.†

About eight o'clock in the evening rockets were sent up as signals for the simultaneous attack. Hamilton, to his great joy, led the advance of the Americans. The men, without waiting for the sappers to demolish the abatis in regular style, pushed them aside or pulled them down with their hands, and scrambled over, like rough bush-fighters. Hamilton was the first to mount the parapet, placing one foot on the shoulder of a soldier, who knelt on one knee for the purpose.‡ The men mounted after him. Not a musket was fired. The redoubt was carried at the point of the bayonet. The loss of the Americans was one sergeant and eight privates killed, seven officers and twenty-five non-commissioned officers and privates wounded. The loss of the enemy was eight killed and seventeen taken prisoners. Among the latter was Major Campbell, who had commanded the redoubt. A New Hampshire captain of artillery would have taken his life in revenge of the death of his favorite Colonel

* Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, ii. 342.

† Lafayette to Washington. *Correspondence of the Rev.*, iii. 426.

‡ Leake's *Life of John Lamb*, p. 259.

Scammel, but Colonel Hamilton prevented him. Not a man was killed after he ceased to resist.*

The French stormed the other redoubt, which was more strongly garrisoned, with equal gallantry, but less precipitation. They proceeded according to rule. The soldiers paused while the sappers removed the abatis, during which time they were exposed to a destructive fire, and lost more men than did the Americans in their headlong attack. As the Baron de Viomenil, who led the party, was thus waiting, Major Barbour, Lafayette's aide-de-camp, came through the tremendous fire of the enemy, with a message from the marquis, letting him know that he was in his redoubt, and wished to know where the baron was. "Tell the marquis," replied the latter, "that I am not in mine, but will be in it in five minutes."

The abatis being removed, the troops rushed to the assault. The Chevalier de Lameth, Lafayette's adjutant-general, was the first to mount the parapet of the redoubt, and received a volley at arms' length from the Hessians who manned it. Shot through both knees, he fell back into the ditch, and was conveyed away under care of his friend, the Count de Dumas. The Count de

* Thacher, p. 341.

N. B.—Gordon, in his history of the war, asserts that Lafayette, with the consent of Washington, ordered that, in capturing the redoubt, no quarter should be shown: in retaliation of a massacre perpetrated at Fort Griswold. It is needless to contradict a statement so opposed to the characters of both. It has been denied by both Lafayette and Hamilton. Not one of the enemy was killed unless in action.

Deuxponts, leading on the royal grenadiers of the same name, was likewise wounded.

The grenadiers of the Gatinais regiment remembered the promise of De Rochambeau, and fought with true Gallic fire. One third of them were slain, and among them Captain de Sireuil, a valiant officer of chasseurs; but the regiment by its bravery on this occasion regained from the king its proud name of the *Royal Auvergne.*

Washington was an intensely excited spectator of these assaults, on the result of which so much depended. He had dismounted, given his horse to a servant, and taken his stand in the grand battery with Generals Knox and Lincoln and their staffs. The risk he ran of a chance shot, while watching the attack through an embrasure, made those about him uneasy. One of his aides-de-camp ventured to observe that the situation was very much exposed. "If you think so," replied he gravely, "you are at liberty to step back."

Shortly afterwards a musket ball struck the cannon in the embrasure, rolled along it, and fell at his feet. General Knox grasped his arm. "My dear general," exclaimed he, "we can't spare you yet." "It is a spent ball," replied Washington quietly; "no harm is done."

When all was over and the redoubts were taken, he drew a long breath, and turning to Knox, observed, "The work is done, *and well done!*" Then called to his servant, "William, bring me my horse."

In his despatches he declared that in these assaults

nothing could exceed the firmness and bravery of the troops. Lafayette also testified to the conduct of Colonel Hamilton, "whose well-known talents and gallantry," writes he, "were on this occasion most conspicuous and serviceable." *

The redoubts thus taken were included the same night in the second parallel, and howitzers were mounted upon them the following day. The capture of them reduced Lord Cornwallis almost to despair. Writing that same day to Sir Henry Clinton, he observes, "My situation now becomes very critical; we dare not show a gun to their old batteries, and I expect that their new ones will open to-morrow morning. . . . . The safety of the place is, therefore, so precarious, that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run great risk in endeavoring to save us,"—a generous abnegation of self on the part of the beleaguered commander. Had the fleet and army sailed, as he had been given to expect, about the 5th of October, they might have arrived in time to save his lordship; but at the date of the above letter they were still lingering in port. Delay of naval succor was fatal to British operations in this war.

The second parallel was now nearly ready to open. Cornwallis dreaded the effect of its batteries on his almost dismantled works. To retard the danger as much as possible, he ordered an attack on two of the batteries

* Lafayette to Washington. *Cor. of the Rev.*, iii. 426.

that were in the greatest state of forwardness, their guns to be spiked. It was made a little before daybreak of the 16th, by about three hundred and fifty men, under the direction of Lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie. He divided his forces; a detachment of guards and a company of grenadiers attacked one battery, and a corps of light infantry the other.

The redoubts which covered the batteries were forced in gallant style, and several pieces of artillery spiked. By this time the supporting troops from the trenches came up, and the enemy were obliged to retreat, leaving behind them seven or eight dead and six prisoners. The French, who had guard of this part of the trenches, had four officers and twelve privates killed or wounded, and the Americans lost one sergeant. The mischief had been done too hastily. The spikes were easily extracted, and before evening all the batteries and the parallel were nearly complete.

At this time the garrison could not show a gun on the side of the works exposed to attack, and the shells were nearly expended; the place was no longer tenable. Rather than surrender, Cornwallis determined to attempt an escape. His plan was to leave his sick and wounded and his baggage behind, cross over in the night to Gloucester Point, attack Choisy's camp before daybreak, mount his infantry on the captured cavalry horses, and on such other as could be collected on the road, push for the upper country by rapid marches until

opposite the fords of the great rivers, then turn suddenly northward, force his way through Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Jerseys, and join Sir Henry Clinton in New York.

It was a wild and daring scheme, but his situation was desperate, and the idea of surrender intolerable.

In pursuance of this design, sixteen large boats were secretly prepared; a detachment was appointed to remain and capitulate for the town's people, the sick and the wounded; a large part of the troops were transported to the Gloucester side of the river before midnight, and the second division had actually embarked, when a violent storm of wind and rain scattered the boats, and drove them a considerable distance down the river. They were collected with difficulty. It was now too late to effect the passage of the second division before daybreak, and an effort was made to get back the division which had already crossed. It was not done until the morning was far advanced, and the troops in recrossing were exposed to the fire of the American batteries.

The hopes of Lord Cornwallis were now at an end. His works were tumbling in ruins about him, under an incessant cannonade; his garrison was reduced in number by sickness and death, and exhausted by constant watching and severe duty. Unwilling to expose the residue of the brave troops which had stood by him so faithfully, to the dangers and horrors of an assault, which could not fail to be successful, he ordered a parley to be beaten

about ten o'clock on the morning of the 17th, and despatched a flag with a letter to Washington proposing a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and that two officers might be appointed by each side to meet and settle terms for the surrender of the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester.

Washington felt unwilling to grant such delay, when reinforcements might be on the way for Cornwallis from New York. In reply, therefore, he requested that, previous to the meeting of commissioners, his lordship's proposals might be sent in writing to the American lines, for which purpose a suspension of hostilities during two hours from the delivery of the letter, would be granted. This was complied with; but as the proposals offered by Cornwallis were not all admissible, Washington drew up a schedule of such terms as he would grant, and transmitted it to his lordship.

The armistice was prolonged. Commissioners met, the Viscount de Noailles and Lieutenant-colonel Laurens on the part of the allies; Colonel Dundas and Major Ross on the part of the British. After much discussion, a rough draft was made of the terms of capitulation to be submitted to the British general. These Washington caused to be promptly transcribed, and sent to Lord Cornwallis early in the morning of the 19th, with a note expressing his expectation that they would be signed by eleven o'clock, and that the garrison would be ready to march out by two o'clock in the afternoon. Lord Cornwallis

was fain to comply, and, accordingly, on the same day, the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester were surrendered to General Washington as commander-in-chief of the combined army; and the ships of war, transports, and other vessels, to the Count de Grasse, as commander of the French fleet. The garrison of Yorktown and Gloucester, including the officers of the navy and seamen of every denomination, were to surrender as prisoners of war to the combined army; the land force to remain prisoners to the United States, the seamen to the King of France.

The garrison was to be allowed the same honors granted to the garrison of Charleston when it surrendered to Sir Henry Clinton. The officers were to retain their side arms; both officers and soldiers their private property, and no part of their baggage or papers was to be subject to search or inspection. The soldiers were to be kept in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania, as much by regiments as possible, and supplied with the same rations of provisions as the American soldiers. The officers were to be permitted to proceed, upon parole, to Europe or to any maritime port on the continent of America in possession of British troops. The *Bonetta* sloop-of-war was to be at the disposal of Lord Cornwallis; to convey an aide-de-camp, with despatches to Sir Henry Clinton, with such soldiers as he might think proper to send to New York, and was to sail without examination. (We will here observe that in this vessel,

thus protected from scrutiny, a number of royalists, whose conduct had rendered them peculiarly odious to their countrymen, privately took their departure.)

It was arranged in the allied camp that General Lincoln should receive the submission of the royal army, precisely in the manner in which the submission of his own army had been received on the surrender of Charleston. An eye-witness has given us a graphic description of the ceremony.

"At about twelve o'clock the combined army was drawn up in two lines more than a mile in length, the Americans on the right side of the road, the French on their left. Washington, mounted on a noble steed, and attended by his staff, was in front of the former; the Count de Rochambeau and his suite, of the latter. The French troops in complete uniform, and well equipped, made a brilliant appearance, and had marched to the ground with a band of music playing, which was a novelty in the American service. The American troops, but

NOTE.

The number of prisoners made by the above capitulation amounted to 7,073, of whom 5,950 were rank and file; six commissioned and twenty-eight non-commissioned officers and privates, had previously been captured in the two redoubts, or in the sortie of the garrison. The loss sustained by the garrison during the siege, in killed, wounded, and missing, amounted to 552. That of the combined army in killed was about 300. The combined army to which Cornwallis surrendered, was estimated at 16,000, of whom 7,000 were French, 5,500 Continentals, and 3,500 militia.—*Holmes' Annals*, vol. ii. p. 333.

part in uniform, and all in garments much the worse for wear, yet had a spirited, soldier-like air, and were not the worse in the eyes of their countrymen for bearing the marks of hard service and great privations. The concourse of spectators from the country seemed equal in number to the military, yet silence and order prevailed.

"About two o'clock the garrison sallied forth, and passed through with shouldered arms, slow and solemn steps, colors cased, and drums beating a British march. They were all well clad, having been furnished with new suits prior to the capitulation. They were led by General O'Hara on horseback, who, riding up to General Washington, took off his hat and apologized for the non-appearance of Lord Cornwallis, on account of indisposition. Washington received him with dignified courtesy, but pointed to Major-general Lincoln as the officer who was to receive the submission of the garrison. By him they were conducted into a field where they were to ground their arms. In passing through the line formed by the allied army, their march was careless and irregular, and their aspect sullen, the order to 'ground arms' was given by their platoon officer with a tone of deep chagrin, and many of the soldiers threw down their muskets with a violence sufficient to break them. This irregularity was checked by General Lincoln; yet it was excusable in brave men in their unfortunate predicament. This ceremony over, they were conducted back to York-

town, to remain under guard until removed to their places of destination." *

On the following morning, Washington in general orders congratulated the allied armies on the recent victory, awarding high praise to the officers and troops both French and American, for their conduct during the siege, and specifying by name several of the generals and other officers who had especially distinguished themselves. All those of his army who were under arrest, were pardoned and set at liberty. "Divine service," it was added, "is to be performed to-morrow in the several brigades and divisions. The commander-in-chief earnestly recommends that the troops, not on duty, should universally attend, with that seriousness of deportment and gratitude of heart which the recognition of such reiterated and astonishing interpositions of Providence demand of us."

Cornwallis felt deeply the humiliation of this close to all his wide and wild campaigning, and was made more sensitive on the subject by circumstances of which he soon became apprised. On the very day that he had been compelled to lay down his arms before Yorktown, the lingering armament intended for his relief sailed from New York. It consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, two fifty-gun ships, and eight frigates; with Sir Henry Clinton and seven thousand of his best troops. Sir Henry arrived off the Capes of Virginia on the 24th,

* Thacher, p. 346.

and gathered information which led him to apprehend that Lord Cornwallis had capitulated. He hovered off the mouth of the Chesapeake until the 29th, when, having fully ascertained that he had come too late, he turned his tardy prows toward New York.

Cornwallis, in a letter written subsequently, renders the following testimony to the conduct of his captors: "The treatment, in general, that we have received from the enemy since our surrender has been perfectly good and proper; but the kindness and attention that has been shown to us by the French officers in particular, their delicate sensibility of our situation, their generous and pressing offer of money, both public and private, to any amount, has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an impression in the breast of every officer, whenever the fortune of war shall put any of them into our power."

In the meantime, the rejoicings which Washington had commenced with appropriate solemnities in the victorious camp, had spread throughout the Union. "Cornwallis is taken!" was the universal acclaim. It was considered a death-blow to the war.

Congress gave way to transports of joy. Thanks were voted to the commander-in-chief, to the Counts de Rochambeau and De Grasse, to the officers of the allied armies generally, and to the corps of artillery and engineers especially. Two stands of colors, trophies of the capitulation, were voted to Washington, two pieces of

field ordnance to De Rochambeau and De Grasse; and it was decreed that a marble column, commemorative of the alliance between France and the United States, and of the victory achieved by their associated arms, should be erected in Yorktown. Finally, Congress issued a proclamation, appointing a day for general thanksgiving and prayer, in acknowledgment of this signal interposition of Divine Providence.

Far different was the feeling of the British ministry when news of the event reached the other side of the Atlantic. Lord George Germaine was the first to announce it to Lord North at his office in Downing Street. "And how did he take it?" was the inquiry. "As he would have taken a ball in the breast," replied Lord George, "for he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly as he paced up and down the apartment, 'O God! it is all over!'" *

* Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 99.

CHAPTER XXIX.

DISSOLUTION OF THE COMBINED ARMIES.—WASHINGTON AT ELTHAM.—DEATH OF JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.—WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON.—CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT THE NEXT CAMPAIGN.—LAFAYETTE SAILS FOR FRANCE.—WASHINGTON STIMULATES CONGRESS TO MILITARY PREPARATIONS.—PROJECT TO SURPRISE AND CARRY OFF PRINCE WILLIAM HENRY FROM NEW YORK.—THE CASE OF CAPTAIN ASGILL.

WASHINGTON would have followed up the reduction of Yorktown by a combined operation against Charleston, and addressed a letter to the Count de Grasse on the subject, but the count alleged in reply that the orders of his court, ulterior projects, and his engagements with the Spaniards, rendered it impossible to remain the necessary time for the operation.

The prosecution of the Southern war, therefore, upon the broad scale which Washington had contemplated, had to be relinquished; for without shipping and a convoy, the troops and everything necessary for a siege would have to be transported by land with immense trouble, expense, and delay; while the enemy, by means of their fleets, could reinforce or withdraw the garrison at pleasure.

Under these circumstances, Washington had to content

himself, for the present, with detaching two thousand Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia continental troops, under General St. Clair, for the support of General Greene, trusting that, with this aid, he would be able to command the interior of South Carolina, and confine the enemy to the town of Charleston.

A dissolution of the combined forces now took place. The Marquis St. Simon embarked his troops on the last of October, and the Count de Grasse made sail on the 4th of November, taking with him two beautiful horses which Washington had presented to him in token of cordial regard.

Lafayette, seeing there was no probability of further active service in the present year, resolved to return to France on a visit to his family, and, with Washington's approbation, set out for Philadelphia to obtain leave of absence from Congress.

The British prisoners were marched to Winchester in Virginia, and Frederickstown in Maryland, and Lord Cornwallis and his principal officers sailed for New York on parole.

The main part of the American army embarked for the Head of Elk, and returned northward under the command of General Lincoln, to be cantoned for the winter in the Jerseys and on the Hudson, so as to be ready for operations against New York, or elsewhere, in the next year's campaign.

The French army were to remain for the winter, in

Virginia, and the Count de Rochambeau established his head-quarters at Williamsburg.

Having attended in person to the distribution of ordnance and stores, the departure of prisoners, and the embarkation of the troops under Lincoln, Washington left Yorktown on the 5th of November, and arrived the same day at Eltham, the seat of his friend Colonel Bassett. He arrived just in time to receive the last breath of John Parke Custis, the son of Mrs. Washington, as he had, several years previously, rendered tender and pious offices at the death-bed of his sister, Miss Custis. The deceased had been an object of Washington's care from childhood, and been cherished by him with paternal affection. Formed under his guidance and instructions, he had been fitted to take a part in the public concerns of his country, and had acquitted himself with credit as a member of the Virginia Legislature. He was but twenty-eight years old at the time of his death, and left a widow and four young children. It was an unexpected event, and the dying scene was rendered peculiarly affecting from the presence of the mother and wife of the deceased. Washington remained several days at Eltham to comfort them in their afflictions. As a consolation to Mrs. Washington in her bereavement, he adopted the two youngest children of the deceased, a boy and girl, who thenceforth formed a part of his immediate family.

From Eltham, Washington proceeded to Mount Vernon; but public cares gave him little leisure to attend to

his private concerns. We have seen how repeatedly his steady mind had been exercised in the darkest times of the revolutionary struggle, in buoying up the public heart when sinking into despondency. He had now an opposite task to perform, to guard against an overweening confidence inspired by the recent triumph. In a letter to General Greene, he writes: "I shall remain but a few days here, and shall proceed to Philadelphia, when I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that Congress, viewing this stroke in too important a point of light, may think our work too nearly closed, and will fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this error, I shall employ every means in my power, and if, unhappily, we sink into that fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

In a letter written at the same time to Lafayette, who, having obtained from Congress an indefinite leave of absence, was about to sail, he says: "I owe it to your friendship and to my affectionate regard for you, my dear marquis, not to let you leave this country, without carrying with you fresh marks of my attachment to you, and new expressions of the high sense I entertain of your military conduct, and other important services in the course of the last campaign." In reply to inquiries which the marquis had made respecting the operations

of the coming year, he declares that everything must depend absolutely for success upon the naval force to be employed in these seas and the time of its appearance. "No land force," writes he, "can act decisively unless it is accompanied by a maritime superiority; nor can more than negative advantages be expected without it. For proof of this we have only to recur to the instances of the ease and facility with which the British shifted their ground, as advantages were to be obtained at either extremity of the continent, and to their late heavy loss the moment they failed in their naval superiority. . . . . A doubt did not exist, nor does it at this moment, in any man's mind, of the total extirpation of the British force in the Carolinas and Georgia, if the Count de Grasse could have extended his coöperation two months longer."

We may add here that Congress, after resolutions highly complimentary to the marquis, had, through the secretary of foreign affairs, recommended to the ministers plenipotentiary of the United States, resident in Europe, to confer with the marquis, and avail themselves of his information relative to the situation of national affairs, which information the various heads of departments were instructed to furnish him; and he was furthermore made the bearer of a letter to his sovereign, recommending him in the strongest terms to the royal consideration. Much was anticipated from the generous zeal of Lafayette, and the influence he would be

able to exercise in France, in favor of the American cause.

Towards the end of November, Washington was in Philadelphia, where Congress received him with distinguished honors. He lost no time in enforcing the policy respecting the ensuing campaign, which he had set forth in his letters to General Greene and the marquis. His views were met by the military committee of Congress, with which he was in frequent consultation, and by the secretaries of war, finance, and public affairs, who attended their conferences. Under his impulse and personal supervision, the military arrangements for 1782 were made with unusual despatch. On the 10th of December resolutions were passed in Congress for requisitions of men and money from the several States; and Washington backed those requisitions by letters to the respective governors, urging prompt compliance. Strenuous exertions, too, were made by Dr. Franklin, then minister in France, to secure a continuance of efficient aid from that power; and a loan of six millions had been promised by the king after hearing of the capitulation of Yorktown.

The persuasion that peace was at hand was, however, too prevalent for the public to be roused to new sacrifices and toils to maintain what was considered the mere shadow of a war. The States were slow in furnishing a small part of their respective quotas of troops, and still slower in answering to the requisitions for money.

After remaining four months in Philadelphia, Washington set out in March to rejoin the army at Newburg on the Hudson. He was at Morristown in the Jerseys on the 28th, when a bold project was submitted to him by Colonel Matthias Ogden, of the Jersey line. Prince William Henry,* son of the king of England, who was serving as a midshipman in the fleet of Admiral Digby, was at that time in New York with the admiral, an object of great attention to the army, and the tory part of the inhabitants. The project of Colonel Ogden was to surprise the prince and the admiral at their quarters in the city, and bring them off prisoners. He was to be aided in the enterprise by a captain, a subaltern, three sergeants, and thirty-six men. They were to embark from the Jersey shore on a rainy night in four whale-boats, well manned, and rowed with muffled oars, and were to land in New York at half-past nine, at a wharf not far from the quarters of the prince and admiral, which were in Hanover Square. Part of the men were to guard the boats, while Colonel Ogden with a strong party was to proceed to the house, force the doors if necessary, and capture the prince and admiral. In returning to the boats, part of the men, armed with guns and bayonets, were to precede the prisoners, and part to follow at half a gunshot distance, to give front to the enemy until all were embarked.

* Afterwards William IV.

The plan was approved by Washington, but Colonel Ogden was charged to be careful that no insult or indignity be offered to the prince or admiral, should they be captured. They were, on the contrary, to be treated with all possible respect, and conveyed without delay to Congress.

How far an attempt was made to carry this plan into operation, is not known. An exaggerated alarm seems to have been awakened by extravagant reports circulated in New York, as appears by the following citation from a paper or letter dated April 23d, and transmitted by Washington to Ogden :—

"Great seem to be their apprehensions here. About a fortnight ago a number of flat-boats were discovered by a sentinel from the bank of the river (Hudson), which are said to have been intended to fire the suburbs, and in the height of the conflagration to make a descent on the lower part of the city, and wrest from our embraces his Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, Prince William Henry, and several other illustrious personages—since which, great precautions have been taken for the security of those gentlemen, by augmenting the guards, and to render their persons as little exposed as possible."

These precautions very probably disconcerted the project of Colonel Ogden, of which we find no other traces.

In a recent letter to General Greene, Washington had expressed himself strongly on the subject of retaliation.

"Of all laws it is the most difficult to execute, where you have not the transgressor himself in your possession. Humanity will ever interfere, and plead strongly against the sacrifice of an innocent person for the guilt of another."

It was but three or four months after this writing, that his judgment and feelings were put to the proof in this respect. We have had occasion to notice the marauds of the New York refugees in the Jerseys. One of their number by the name of Philip White had been captured by the Jersey people, and killed in attempting to escape from those who were conducting him to Monmouth jail. His partisans in New York determined on a signal revenge. Captain Joseph Huddy, an ardent whig, who had been captured when bravely defending a block-house in Monmouth County, and carried captive to New York, was now drawn forth from prison, conducted into the Jerseys by a party of refugees, headed by a Captain Lippencott, and hanged on the heights of Middletown with a label affixed to his breast, bearing the inscription, "Up goes Huddy for Philip White."

The neighboring country cried out for retaliation. Washington submitted the matter, with all the evidence furnished, to a board of general and field officers. It was unanimously determined that the offender should be demanded for execution, and, if not given up, that retaliation should be exercised on a British prisoner of equal rank. Washington accordingly sent proofs to Sir Henry

Clinton of what he stigmatized as a murder, and demanded that Captain Lippencott, or the officer who commanded the execution of Captain Huddy, should be given up; or if that officer should be inferior in rank, so many of the perpetrators as would, according to the tariff of exchange, be an equivalent. "To do this," said he, "will mark the justice of your Excellency's character. In failure of it, I shall hold myself justifiable in the eyes of God and man, for the measure to which I will resort."

Sir Henry declined a compliance, but stated that he had ordered a strict inquiry into the circumstances of Captain Huddy's death and would bring the perpetrators of it to immediate trial.

Washington about the same time received the copy of a resolution of Congress approving of his firm and judicious conduct, in his application to the British general at New York, and promising to support him "in his fixed purpose of exemplary retaliation."

He accordingly ordered a selection to be made by lot, for the above purpose, from among the British officers, prisoners at Lancaster in Pennsylvania. To enhance the painful nature of the case, the lot fell upon Captain Charles Asgill, of the Guards, a youth only nineteen years of age, of an amiable character and high hopes and expectations, being only son and heir of Sir Charles Asgill, a wealthy baronet.

The youth bore his lot with firmness, but his fellow-prisoners were incensed at Sir Henry Clinton for expos-

ing him to such a fate by refusing to deliver up the culprit. One of their number, a son of the Earl of Ludlow, solicited permission from Washington to proceed to New York and lay the case before Sir Guy Carleton who had succeeded in command to Sir Henry Clinton. In granting it, Washington intimated that, though deeply affected by the unhappy fate to which Captain Asgill was subjected, and devoutly wishing that his life might be spared, there was but one alternative that could save him, of which the British commander must be aware.

The matter remained for some time in suspense. Washington had ordered that Captain Asgill should be treated "with every tender attention and politeness (consistent with his present situation), which his rank, fortune, and connections, together with his unfortunate state, demanded," and the captain himself acknowledged in writing the feeling and attentive manner in which those commands were executed. But on the question of retaliation Washington remained firm.

Lippencott was at length tried by a court-martial, but, after a long sitting, acquitted, it appearing that he had acted under the verbal orders of Governor Franklin, president of the board of associated loyalists. The British commander reprobated the death of Captain Huddy, and broke up the board.

These circumstances changed in some degree the ground upon which Washington was proceeding. He

laid the whole matter before Congress, admitted Captain Asgill on parole at Morristown, and subsequently intimated to the secretary of war his private opinion in favor of his release, with permission to go to his friends in Europe.

In the meantime Lady Asgill, the mother of the youth, had written a pathetic letter to the Count de Vergennes, the French minister of state, imploring his intercession in behalf of her son. The letter was shown to the king and queen, and by their direction the count wrote to Washington soliciting the liberation of Asgill. Washington, as has been shown, had already suggested his release, and was annoyed at the delay of Congress in the matter. He now referred to that body the communication from the count, and urged a favorable decision. To his great relief, he received their directions to set Captain Asgill at liberty.

This, like the case of the unfortunate André, was one of the painful and trying predicaments in which a strict sense of public duty obliged Washington to do violence to his natural impulses, and he declares in one of his letters, that the situation of Captain Asgill often filled him with the keenest anguish. "I felt for him on many accounts; and not the least when, viewing him as a man of honor and sentiment, I considered how unfortunate it was for him that a wretch who possessed neither, should be the means of causing him a single pang or a disagreeable sensation."

NOTE.

While these pages are going through the press, we have before us an instance of that conscientious regard for justice which governed Washington's conduct.

A favorite aide-de-camp, Colonel Samuel B. Webb, who had been wounded in the battles of Bunker's Hill and White Plains, was captured in December, 1777, when commanding a Connecticut regiment, and accompanying General Parsons in a descent upon Long Island. He was then but 24 years of age, and the youngest colonel in the army. Presuming upon the favor of General Washington, who had pronounced him one of the most accomplished gentlemen in the service, he wrote to him, reporting his capture, and begging most strenuously for an immediate exchange. He received a prompt, but disappointing reply. Washington lamented his unfortunate condition. "It would give me pleasure," said he, "to render you any services in my power, but it is impossible for me to comply with your request, without violating the principles of justice, and incurring a charge of partiality."

In fact, several officers of Colonel Webb's rank had been a long time in durance, and it was a rule with Washington that those first captured should be first released. To this rule he inflexibly adhered, however his feelings might plead for its infringement. Colonel Webb, in consequence, was not exchanged until the present year; when Washington, still on principles of justice, gave him the brevet rank of Brigadier-general and the command of the light infantry.

CHAPTER XXX.

WASHINGTON CONTINUES HIS PRECAUTIONS.—SIR GUY CARLETON BRINGS PACIFIC NEWS. — DISCONTENTS OF THE ARMY. — EXTRAORDINARY LETTER FROM COLONEL NICOLA.—INDIGNANT REPLY OF WASHINGTON.—JOINT LETTER OF SIR GUY CARLETON AND ADMIRAL DIGBY.—JUNCTION OF THE ALLIED ARMIES ON THE HUDSON.—CONTEMPLATED REDUCTION OF THE ARMY.

IN disposing of the case of Captain Asgill, we have anticipated dates, and must revert to the time when Washington again established his head-quarters at Newburg on the Hudson. The solicitude felt by him on account of the universal relaxation of the sinews of war, was not allayed by reports of pacific speeches, and motions made in the British Parliament, which might be delusive. "Even if the nation and parliament," said he, "are really in earnest to obtain peace with America, it will, undoubtedly, be wisdom in us to meet them with great caution and circumspection, and by all means to keep our arms firm in our hands; and instead of relaxing one iota in our exertions, rather to spring forward with redoubled vigor, that we may take the advantage of every favorable opportunity, until our wishes are fully obtained. No nation ever yet suffered in

treaty by preparing, even in the moment of negotiation, most vigorously for the field."

Sir Guy Carleton arrived in New York early in May to take the place of Sir Henry Clinton, who had solicited his recall. In a letter dated May 7th, Sir Guy informed Washington of his being joined with Admiral Digby in the commission of peace; he transmitted at the same time printed copies of the proceedings in the House of Commons on the 4th of March, respecting an address to the king in favor of peace; and of a bill reported in consequence thereof, authorizing the king to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted provinces of North America. As this bill, however, had not passed into a law when Sir Guy left England, it presented no basis for a negotiation; and was only cited by him to show the pacific disposition of the British nation, with which he professed the most zealous concurrence. Still, though multiplied circumstances gradually persuaded Washington of a real disposition on the part of Great Britain to terminate the war, he did not think fit to relax his preparations for hostilities.

Great discontents prevailed at this time in the army, both among officers and men. The neglect of the States to furnish their proportions of the sum voted by Congress for the prosecution of the war, had left the army almost destitute. There was scarce money sufficient to feed the troops from day to day; indeed, there were days when they were absolutely in want of provisions. The

pay of the officers, too, was greatly in arrear; many of them doubted whether they would ever receive the half-pay decreed to them by Congress for a term of years after the conclusion of the war, and fears began to be expressed that, in the event of peace, they would all be disbanded with their claims unliquidated, and themselves cast upon the community penniless, and unfitted, by long military habitudes, for the gainful pursuits of peace.

At this juncture Washington received an extraordinary letter from Colonel Lewis Nicola, a veteran officer, once commandant of Fort Mifflin, who had been in habits of intimacy with him, and had warmly interceded in behalf of the suffering army. In this letter he attributed all the ills experienced and anticipated by the army and the public at large, to the existing form of government. He condemned a republican form as incompatible with national prosperity, and advised a mixed government like that of England; which, he had no doubt, on its benefits being properly pointed out, would be readily adopted. "In that case," he adds, "it will, I believe, be uncontroverted, that the same abilities which have led us through difficulties apparently insurmountable by human power, to victory and glory; those qualities that have merited and obtained the universal esteem and veneration of an army, would be most likely to conduct and direct us in the smoother paths of peace. Some people have so connected the idea of tyranny and monarchy, as to find it very difficult to separate them. It may, therefore, be

requisite to give the head of such a constitution as I propose, some title apparently more moderate; but, if all other things were once adjusted, I believe strong arguments might be produced for admitting the title of King, which, I conceive, would be attended with some material advantages."

Washington saw at once that Nicola was but the organ of a military faction, disposed to make the army the basis of an energetic government, and to place him at the head. The suggestion, backed by the opportunity, might have tempted a man of meaner ambition: from him it drew the following indignant letter:—

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence, and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time,

in justice to my own feelings, I must add, that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself, or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature."

On the 2d of August, Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby wrote a joint letter to Washington, informing him that they were acquainted, by authority, that negotiations for a general peace had already been commenced at Paris, and that the independence of the United States would be proposed in the first instance by the British commissioner, instead of being made a condition of a general treaty.

Even yet, Washington was wary. "From the former infatuation, duplicity, and perverse system of British policy," said he, "I confess I am induced to doubt everything; to suspect everything." . . . . "Whatever the real intention of the enemy may be, I think the strictest attention and exertion, which have ever been exercised on our part, instead of being diminished, ought to be increased. Jealousy and precaution at least can do no harm. Too much confidence and supineness may be pernicious in the extreme."

What gave force to this policy was, that as yet no offers had been made on the part of Great Britain, for a general cessation of hostilities, and, although the British commanders were in a manner tied down by the resolves of the House of Commons, to a defensive war only, in the United States, they might be at liberty to transport part of their force to the West Indies, to act against the French possessions in that quarter. With these considerations he wrote to the Count de Rochambeau, then at Baltimore, advising him, for the good of the common cause, to march his troops to the banks of the Hudson, and form a junction with the American army.

The junction took place about the middle of September. The French army crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point, where the American forces were paraded under arms to welcome them. The clothing and arms recently received from France or captured at Yorktown, enabled them to make an unusually respectable appearance. Two lines were formed from the landing-place to head-quarters, between which Count Rochambeau passed, escorted by a troop of cavalry; after which he took his station beside General Washington; the music struck up a French march, and the whole army passed in review before them.

The French army encamped on the left of the American, near Crompond, about ten miles from Verplanck's Point. The greatest good will continued to prevail between the allied forces, though the Americans had but

little means of showing hospitality to their gay Gallic friends. "Only conceive the mortification they must suffer, even the general officers," says Washington in a letter to the secretary of war, "when they cannot invite a French officer, a visiting friend, or a travelling acquaintance, to a better repast than whiskey hot from the still, and not always that, and a bit of beef without vegetables will afford them."

Speaking of a contemplated reduction of the army to take place on the 1st of January: "While I premise," said he, "that no one I have seen or heard of appears opposed to the principle of reducing the army as circumstances may require; yet I cannot help fearing the result of the measure in contemplation, under present circumstances, when I see such a number of men, goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation on the future, about to be turned into the world, soured by penury, and what they call ingratitude of the public, involved in debts, without one farthing of money to carry them home, after having spent the flower of their days, and many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country, and suffered everything that human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death,—I repeat it, that when I consider these irritating circumstances, without one thing to soothe their feelings or dispel the gloomy prospects, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow, of a very serious and distressing nature. . . . . .

"I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the reality would justify me in doing it. I could give anecdotes of patriotism and distress, which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed in the history of mankind. But you may rely upon it, the patience and long-suffering of this army are almost exhausted, and that there was never so great a spirit of discontent as at this instant. While in the field, I think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of outrage; but when we retire into winter-quarters, unless the storm is previously dissipated, I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace."

CHAPTER XXXI.

DISCONTENTS OF THE ARMY AT NEWBURG.—MEMORIAL OF THE OFFICERS TO CONGRESS.—ANONYMOUS PAPERS CIRCULATED IN THE CAMP.—MEETING OF OFFICERS CALLED.—ADDRESS OF WASHINGTON.—RESOLUTIONS IN CONSEQUENCE.—LETTERS OF WASHINGTON TO THE PRESIDENT.—HIS OPINION OF THE ANONYMOUS ADDRESSES AND THEIR AUTHOR.

THE anxious fears of Washington in regard to what might take place on the approaching reduction of the army, were in some degree realized. After the meeting with the French army at Verplanck's Point, he had drawn up his forces to his former encampment at Newburg, where he established his headquarters for the winter. In the leisure and idleness of a winter camp, the discontents of the army had time to ferment. The arrearages of pay became a topic of angry and constant comment, as well as the question, whether the resolution of Congress, granting half pay to officers who should serve to the end of the war, would be carried into effect. Whence were the funds to arise for such half pay? The national treasury was empty; the States were slow to tax themselves; the resource of foreign loans was nearly exhausted. The articles of confedera-

tion required the concurrence of nine States to any act appropriating public money. There had never been nine States in favor of the half-pay establishment; was it probable that as many would concur in applying any scanty funds that might accrue, and which would be imperiously demanded for many other purposes, to the payment of claims known to be unpopular, and to the support of men, who, the necessity for their services being at an end, might be regarded as drones in the community?

The result of these boding conferences was a memorial to Congress in December, from the officers in camp, on behalf of the army, representing the hardships of the case, and proposing that a specific sum should be granted them for the money actually due, and as a commutation for half pay. Three officers were deputed to present the memorial to Congress, and watch over and promote its success.

The memorial gave rise to animated and long discussions in Congress. Some members were for admitting the claims as founded on engagements entered into by the nation; others were for referring them to the respective States of the claimants. The winter passed away without any definite measures on the subject.

On the 10th of March, 1783, an anonymous paper was circulated through the camp, calling a meeting at eleven o'clock the next day, of the general and field officers, of an officer from each company, and a delegate from the

medical staff, to consider a letter just received from their representatives in Philadelphia, and what measures, if any, should be adopted to obtain that redress of grievances which they seemed to have solicited in vain.

On the following morning an anonymous address to the officers of the army was privately put into circulation. It professed to be from a fellow-soldier, who had shared in their toils and mingled in their dangers, and who till very lately had believed in the justice of his country.

"After a pursuit of seven long years," observed he, 'the object for which we set out is at length brought within our reach. Yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours was active once; it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and bloody war; it has placed her in the chair of independency, and peace returns to bless—whom? a country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services? a country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude and smiles of admiration, longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved? Is this the case? or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distresses? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to Congress—wants and wishes, which gratitude and policy should have anticipated, rather than evaded? And have

you not lately, in the meek language of entreating memorials, begged from their justice what you could no longer expect from their favor? How have you been answered? Let the letter, which you are called to consider to-morrow, make reply!

"If this, then, be your treatment, while the swords you wear are necessary for the defense of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division; when those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this Revolution, and, retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor? If you can, go, and carry with you the jest of tories, and the scorn of whigs; the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world! Go, starve and be forgotten! But if your spirits should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirit sufficient to oppose tyranny, under whatever garb it may assume, whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles; awake, attend to your situation, and redress yourselves! If the present

moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then will be as empty as your entreaties now.

"I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice to the fears of government. Change the milk-and-water style of your last memorial. Assume a bolder tone, decent, but lively, spirited, and determined; and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men, who can feel as well as write, be appointed to draw up your *last remonstrance*, for I would no longer give it the suing, soft, unsuccessful epithet of *memorial*. Let it represent in language that will neither dishonor you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its fears, what has been promised by Congress, and what has been performed; how long and how patiently you have suffered; how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them, that, though you were the first, and would wish to be the last to encounter danger, though despair itself can never drive you into dishonor, it may drive you from the field; that the wound, often irritated and never healed, may at length become incurable; and that the slightest mark of indignity from Congress now, must operate like the grave, and part you forever; that, in any political event, the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate you from your arms but death; if war, that

courting the auspices, and inviting the direction of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and 'mock when their fear cometh on.' But let it represent, also, that should they comply with the request of your late memorial, it would make you more happy and them more respectable; that, while war should continue, you would follow their standard into the field; and when it came to an end, you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause—an army victorious over its enemies, victorious over itself."

This bold and eloquent, but dangerous appeal, founded as it was upon the wrongs and sufferings of a gallant army, and the shameful want of sympathy in tardy legislators, called for the full exercise of Washington's characteristic firmness, caution, and discrimination. In general orders he noticed the anonymous paper, but expressed his confidence that the good sense of officers would prevent them from paying attention to such an irregular invitation; which he reprobated as disorderly. With a view to counteract its effects, he requested a like meeting of officers on the 15th instant, to hear the report of the committee deputed to Congress. "After mature deliberation," added he, "they will devise what further measures ought to be adopted as most rational and best calculated to obtain the just and important object in view."

On the following day another anonymous address was

circulated, written in a more moderate tone, but to the same purport with the first, and affecting to construe the general orders into an approbation of the object sought; only changing the day appointed for the meeting. "Till now," it observes, "the commander-in-chief has regarded the steps you have taken for redress with good wishes alone; his ostensible silence has authorized your meetings, and his private opinion sanctified your claims. Had he disliked the object in view, would not the same sense of duty which forbade you from meeting on the third day of the week, have forbidden you from meeting on the seventh? Is not the same subject held up to your view? and has it not passed the seal of office, and taken all the solemnity of an order? This will give system to your proceedings, and stability to your resolves," etc., etc.

On Saturday, the 15th of March, the meeting took place. Washington had previously sent for the officers, one by one, in private, and enlarged on the loss of character to the whole army, that would result from intemperate resolutions. At the meeting, General Gates was called to the chair. Washington rose and apologized for appearing there, which he had not intended to do when he issued the order directing the assemblage. The diligence, however, which had been used in circulating anonymous writings, rendered it necessary he should give his sentiments to the army on the nature and tendency of them. He had taken this opportunity to do so, and had committed his thoughts to writing, which, with

the indulgence of his brother officers, he would take the liberty of reading to them.

He then proceeded to read a forcible and feeling address, pointing out the irregularity and impropriety of the recent anonymous summons, and the dangerous nature of the anonymous address; a production, as he observed, addressed more to the feelings and passions than to the judgment; drawn with great art, calculated to inspire the mind with an idea of premeditated injustice in the sovereign power of the United States, and to rouse all those resentments which must unavoidably flow from such a belief.

On these principles he had opposed the irregular and hasty meeting appointed in the anonymous summons, not from a disinclination to afford officers every opportunity, consistent with their own honor and the dignity of the army, to make known their grievances. "If my conduct heretofore," said he, "has not evinced to you, that I have been a faithful friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But as I was among the first who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment, but when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distresses, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits; as I have ever considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with

joy when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has arisen when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it; it can scarcely be supposed at this last stage of the war that I am indifferent to its interests." . . . . .

"For myself," observes he, in another part of his address, "a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honor to command, will oblige me to declare in this public and solemn manner, that for the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country and those powers we are bound to respect, you may fully command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.

"While I give you these assurances, and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner to exert whatever abilities I am possessed of in your favor, let me entreat you, gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained; let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress; that, previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in the resolutions which

were published to you two days ago; and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honor, as you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under any specious pretenses, to overturn the liberties of our country; and who wickedly attempts to open the flood-gates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire in blood. By thus determining and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice; you will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind: 'Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.'"

After he had concluded the address, he observed, that as a corroborating testimony of the good disposition in Congress toward the army, he would communicate to them a letter received from a worthy member of that

body, who on all occasions had approved himself their fast friend. He produced an able letter from the Hon. Joseph Jones, which, while it pointed out the difficulties and embarrassments of Congress, held up very forcibly the idea that the army would at all events be generously dealt with.

Major Shaw, who was present, and from whose memoir we note this scene, relates that Washington, after reading the first paragraph of the letter, made a short pause, took out his spectacles, and begged the indulgence of his audience while he put them on, observing at the same time that *he had grown gray in their service, and now found himself growing blind.* "There was something," adds Shaw, "so natural, so unaffected in this appeal, as rendered it superior to the most studied oratory; it forced its way to the heart, and you might see sensibility moisten every eye."

"Happy for America," continues Major Shaw, "that she has a patriot army, and equally so that Washington is its leader. I rejoice in the opportunity I have had of seeing this great man in a variety of situations—calm and intrepid when the battle raged; patient and persevering under the pressure of misfortune; moderate and possessing himself in the full career of victory. Great as these qualifications deservedly render him, he never appeared to me more truly so than at the assembly we have been speaking of. On other occasions he has been supported by the exertions of an army and the

countenance of his friends; but on this he stood single and alone. There was no saying where the passions of an army which were not a little inflamed, might lead; but it was generally allowed that further forbearance was dangerous, and moderation had ceased to be a virtue. Under these circumstances he appeared, not at the head of his troops, but, as it were, in opposition to them; and for a dreadful moment the interests of the army and its general seemed to be in competition! He spoke—every doubt was dispelled, and the tide of patriotism rolled again in its wonted course. Illustrious man! What he says of the army may with equal justice be applied to his own character: 'Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.'" *

The moment Washington retired from the assemblage, a resolution was moved by the warm-hearted Knox, seconded by General Putnam, and passed unanimously, assuring him that the officers reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the human heart is capable. Then followed resolutions, declaring that no circumstances of distress or danger should induce a conduct calculated to sully the reputation and glory acquired at the price of their blood and eight years' faithful services; that they continued to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress

* Quincy's *Memoir of Major Shaw*, p. 104.

and their country; and that the commander-in-chief should be requested to write to the President of Congress, earnestly entreating a speedy decision on the late address forwarded by a committee of the army.

A letter was accordingly written by Washington, breathing that generous yet well-tempered spirit, with which he ever pleaded the cause of the army.

"The result of the proceedings of the grand convention of officers," said he, "which I have the honor of inclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious proof of patriotism which could have been given by men who aspired to the distinction of a patriot army, and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude of their country.

"Having seen the proceedings on the part of the army terminate with perfect unanimity, and in a manner entirely consonant to my wishes; being impressed with the liveliest sentiments of affection for those who have so long, so patiently, and so cheerfully suffered and fought under my immediate direction; having, from motives of justice, duty, and gratitude, spontaneously offered myself as an advocate for their rights; and having been requested to write to your Excellency, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of Congress upon the subjects of the late address from the army to that honorable body; it only remains for me to perform the task I have assumed, and to intercede on their behalf, as I now do,

that the sovereign power will be pleased to verify the predictions I have pronounced, and the confidence the army have reposed in the justice of their country."

After referring to further representations made by him to Congress, on the subject of a half pay to be granted to officers for life, he adds: "If, besides the simple payment of their wages, a further compensation is not due to the sufferings and sacrifices of the officers, then have I been mistaken indeed. If the whole army had not merited whatever a grateful people can bestow, then I have been beguiled by prejudice and built opinion on the basis of error. If this country should not, in the event, perform everything which has been requested in the last memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope that has been excited, void of foundation. And if, as has been suggested for the purpose of inflaming their passions, 'the officers of the army are to be the only sufferers by the Revolution; if, retiring from the field, they are to grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt; if they are to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor;' then shall I have learned what ingratitude is, then shall I have realized a tale which will embitter every moment of my future life. But I am under no such apprehensions. A country, rescued by their arms from impending ruin, will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude."

This letter to the President was accompanied by other

letters to members of Congress; all making similar direct and eloquent appeals. The subject was again taken up in Congress, nine States concurred in a resolution commuting the half pay into a sum equal to five years' whole pay; and the whole matter, at one moment so fraught with danger to the public, through the temperate wisdom of Washington, was happily adjusted.

The anonymous addresses to the army, which were considered at the time so insidious and inflammatory, and which certainly were ill-judged and dangerous, have since been avowed by General John Armstrong, a man who has sustained with great credit to himself various eminent posts under our government. At the time of writing them he was a young man, aide-de-camp to General Gates, and he did it at the request of a number of his fellow-officers, indignant at the neglect of their just claims by Congress, and in the belief that the tardy movements of that body required the spur and the lash. Washington, in a letter dated 23d January, 1797, says, "I have since had sufficient reason for believing that the object of the author was just, honorable, and friendly to the country, though the means suggested by him were certainly liable to much misunderstanding and abuse."

CHAPTER XXXII.

NEWS OF PEACE.—LETTER OF WASHINGTON IN BEHALF OF THE ARMY.—CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES PROCLAIMED.—ORDER OF THE CINCINNATI FORMED.—LETTER OF WASHINGTON TO THE STATE GOVERNORS.—MUTINY IN THE PENNSYLVANIA LINE.—LETTER OF WASHINGTON ON THE SUBJECT.—TOUR TO THE NORTHERN POSTS.

T length arrived the wished-for news of peace. A general treaty had been signed at Paris on the 20th of January. An armed vessel, the *Triumph*, belonging to the Count d'Estaing's squadron, arrived at Philadelphia from Cadiz, on the 23d of March, bringing a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, to the President of Congress, communicating the intelligence. In a few days Sir Guy Carleton informed Washington by letter, that he was ordered to proclaim a cessation of hostilities by sea and land.

A similar proclamation, issued by Congress, was received by Washington on the 17th of April. Being unaccompanied by any instructions respecting the discharge of the part of the army with him, should the measure be deemed necessary, he found himself in a perplexing situation.

The accounts of peace received at different times, had

raised an expectation in the minds of those of his troops that had engaged "for the war," that a speedy discharge must be the consequence of the proclamation. Most of them could not distinguish between a proclamation of a cessation of hostilities and a definitive declaration of peace, and might consider any further claim on their military services an act of injustice. It was becoming difficult to enforce the discipline necessary to the coherence of an army. Washington represented these circumstances in a letter to the President, and earnestly entreated a prompt determination on the part of Congress, as to what was to be the period of the services of these men, and how he was to act respecting their discharge.

One suggestion of his letter is expressive of his strong sympathy with the patriot soldier, and his knowledge of what formed a matter of pride with the poor fellows who had served and suffered under him. He urged that, in discharging those who had been engaged "for the war," the non-commissioned officers and soldiers should be allowed to take with them, as their own property and as a gratuity, their arms and accoutrements. "This act," observes he, "would raise pleasing sensations in the minds of these worthy and faithful men, who, from their early engaging in the war at moderate bounties, and from their patient continuance under innumerable distresses, have not only deserved nobly of their country, but have obtained an honorable distinction over those who, with

shorter terms, have gained large pecuniary rewards. This, at a comparatively small expense, would be deemed an honorable testimonial from Congress of the regard they bear to these distinguished worthies, and the sense they have of their suffering virtues and services. . . . .

"These constant companions of their toils, preserved with sacred attention, would be handed down from the present possessors to their children, as honorary badges of bravery and military merit; and would probably be brought forth on some future occasion, with pride and exultation, to be improved with the same military ardor and emulation in the hands of posterity, as they have been used by their forefathers in the present establishment and foundation of our national independence and glory."

This letter despatched, he notified in general orders that the cessation of hostilities should be proclaimed at noon on the following day, and read in the evening at the head of every regiment and corps of the army, "after which," adds he, "the chaplains with the several brigades will render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his overruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations."

Having noticed that this auspicious day, the 19th of April, completed the eighth year of the war, and was the anniversary of the eventful conflict at Lexington, he went on in general orders, to impress upon the army a

proper idea of the dignified part they were called upon to act.

"The generous task for which we first flew to arms being accomplished; the liberties of our country being fully acknowledged, and firmly secured, and the characters of those who have persevered through every extremity of hardship, suffering, and danger, being immortalized by the appellation of *the patriot army*, nothing now remains, but for the actors of this mighty scene to preserve a perfect, unvarying consistency of character, through the very last act, to close the drama with applause, and to retire from the military theatre with the same approbation of angels and men which has crowned all their former virtuous actions."

The letter which he had written to the President produced a resolution in Congress, that the service of the men engaged in the war did not expire until the ratification of the definitive articles of peace; but that the commander-in-chief might grant furloughs to such as he thought proper, and that they should be allowed to take their arms with them.

Washington availed himself freely of this permission: furloughs were granted without stint; the men set out singly or in small parties for their rustic homes, and the danger and inconvenience were avoided of disbanding large masses, at a time, of unpaid soldiery. Now and then were to be seen three or four in a group, bound probably to the same neighborhood, beguiling the way

with camp jokes and camp stories. The war-worn soldier was always kindly received at the farm-houses along the road, where he might shoulder his gun and fight over his battles. The men thus dismissed on furlough were never called upon to rejoin the army. Once at home, they sank into domestic life; their weapons were hung up over their fire-places, military trophies of the Revolution to be prized by future generations.

In the meantime Sir Guy Carleton was making preparations for the evacuation of the city of New York. The moment he had received the royal order for the cessation of hostilities, he had written for all the shipping that could be procured from Europe and the West Indies. As early as the 27th of April a fleet had sailed for different parts of Nova Scotia, carrying off about seven thousand persons, with all their effects. A great part of these were troops, but many were royalists and refugees, exiled by the laws of the United States. They looked forward with a dreary eye to their voyage, "bound," as one of them said, "to a country where there were nine months of winter and three months of cold weather every year."

On the 6th of May a personal conference took place between Washington and Sir Guy at Orangetown, about the transfer of posts in the United States, held by the British troops, and the delivery of all property stipulated by the treaty to be given up to the Americans. On the 8th of May, Egbert Benson, William S. Smith, and Daniel

Parker, were commissioned by Congress to inspect and superintend at New York the embarkation of persons and property, in fulfillment of the seventh article of the provisional treaty.

While sadness and despair prevailed among the tories and refugees in New York, the officers in the patriot camp on the Hudson were not without gloomy feelings at the thought of their approaching separation from each other. Eight years of dangers and hardships, shared in common and nobly sustained, had welded their hearts together, and made it hard to rend them asunder. Prompted by such feelings, General Knox, ever noted for generous impulses, suggested, as a mode of perpetuating the friendships thus formed, and keeping alive the brotherhood of the camp, the formation of a society composed of the officers of the army. The suggestion met with universal concurrence, and the hearty approbation of Washington.

Meetings were held, at which the Baron Steuben, as senior officer, presided. A plan was drafted by a committee composed of Generals Knox, Hand, and Huntingdon, and Captain Shaw; and the society was organized at a meeting held on the 13th of May, at the baron's quarters in the old Verplanck House, near Fishkill.

By its formula, the officers of the American army in the most solemn manner combined themselves into one society of friends; to endure as long as they should endure, or any of their eldest male posterity, and in failure

thereof, their collateral branches who might be judged worthy of being its supporters and members. In memory of the illustrious Roman, Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus, who retired from war to the peaceful duties of the citizen, it was to be called "The Society of the Cincinnati." The objects proposed by it were to preserve inviolate the rights and liberties for which they had contended; to promote and cherish national honor and union between the States; to maintain brotherly kindness toward each other, and extend relief to such officers and their families as might stand in need of it.

In order to obtain funds for the purpose, each officer was to contribute one month's pay, the interest only to be appropriated to the relief of the unfortunate. The general society, for the sake of frequent communications, was to be divided into State societies, and these again into districts. The general society was to meet annually on the first Monday in May, the State societies on each 4th of July, the districts as often as should be agreed on by the State society.

The society was to have an insignia called "The Order of the Cincinnati." It was to be a golden American eagle, bearing on its breast emblematical devices; this was to be suspended by a deep-blue ribbon two inches wide, edged with white; significative of the union of America with France.

Individuals of the respective States, distinguished for patriotism and talents, might be admitted as honorary

members for life; their numbers never to exceed a ratio of one to four. The French ministers who had officiated at Philadelphia, and the French admirals, generals, and colonels, who had served in the United States, were to be presented with the insignia of the order, and invited to become members.

Washington was chosen unanimously to officiate as president of it, until the first general meeting, to be held in May, 1784.

On the 8th of June, Washington addressed a letter to the governors of the several States on the subject of the dissolution of the army. The opening of it breathes that aspiration after the serene quiet of private life, which had been his dream of happiness throughout the storms and trials of his anxious career, but the full fruition of which he was never to realize.

"The great object," said he, "for which I had the honor to hold an appointment in the service of my country being accomplished, I am now preparing to return to that domestic retirement which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance; a retirement for which I never ceased to sigh, through a long and painful absence, and in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose."

His letter then described the enviable condition of the citizens of America. "Sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various

soils and climates of the world, and abounding with all the necessaries and conveniences of life; and acknowledged possessors of 'absolute freedom and independency.' This is the time," said he, "of their political probation; this is the moment when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the moment to establish or ruin their national character forever. This is the favorable moment to give such a tone to the federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution; or this may be the moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics which may play one State against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes.

"With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak the language of freedom and sincerity without disguise.

"I am aware, however," continues he, modestly, "that those who differ from me in political sentiment may perhaps remark, that I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty, and may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is the result of the purest intention. But the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives; the part I have hitherto acted in life; the determination I have formed of not taking any share in public business hereafter; the ar-

dent desire I feel, and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying, in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government; will, I flatter myself, sooner or later convince my countrymen that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address."

He then proceeded ably and eloquently to discuss what he considered the four things essential to the well-being, and even the existence of the United States as an independent power.

First. An indissoluble union of the States under one federal head, and a perfect acquiescence of the several States, in the full exercise of the prerogative vested in such a head by the constitution.

Second. A sacred regard to public justice in discharging debts and fulfilling contracts made by Congress, for the purpose of carrying on the war.

Third. The adoption of a proper peace establishment; in which care should be taken to place the militia throughout the Union on a regular, uniform, and efficient footing. "The militia of this country," said he, "must be considered as the palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility. It is essential, therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole: that the formation and discipline of the militia of the continent should be absolutely uniform, and that the same species of arms, accoutrements, and military

apparatus should be introduced in every part of the United States."

And Fourth. A disposition among the people of the United States to forget local prejudices and policies; to make mutual concessions, and to sacrifice individual advantages to the interests of the community.

These four things Washington pronounced the pillars on which the glorious character must be supported. "Liberty is the basis; and whosoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country."

We forbear to go into the ample and admirable reasoning with which he expatiates on these heads, and above all, enforces the sacred inviolability of the Union; they have become familiar with every American mind, and ought to govern every American heart. Nor will we dwell upon his touching appeal on the subject of the half pay and commutation promised to the army, and which began to be considered in the odious light of a pension. "That provision," said he, "should be viewed as it really was—a reasonable compensation offered by Congress, at a time when they had nothing else to give the officers of the army for services then to be performed. It was the only means to prevent a total dereliction of the service. It was a part of their hire. I may be allowed to say it was the price of their blood and of your

independency; it is therefore more than a common debt, it is a debt of honor."

Although we have touched upon but a part of this admirable letter, we cannot omit its affecting close, addressed as it was to each individual governor.

"I have thus freely declared what I wished to make known, before I surrendered up my public trust to those who committed it to me. The task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the chief magistrate of your State, at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office and all the employments of public life.

"It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your legislature at their next meeting, and that they may be considered the legacy of one who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the divine benediction on it.

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to

love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which are the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without whose example in those things we can never hope to be a happy nation."

While the patriot army, encamped under the eye of Washington, bore their hardships and privations without flinching, or returned quietly to their homes with, as yet, no actual reward but the weapons with which they had vindicated their country's cause, about eighty newly recruited soldiers of the Pennsylvania line, stationed at Lancaster, suddenly mutinied and set off in a body for Philadelphia, to demand redress of fancied grievances from the legislature of the State. Arriving at that city, they were joined by about twelve hundred comrades from the barracks, and proceeded on the 2d of June with beat of drum and fixed bayonets to the State House, where Congress and the supreme executive council of Pennsylvania were in session.

Placing sentinels at every door to prevent egress, they sent in a written message to the President and council, threatening military violence if their demands were not complied with in the course of twenty minutes.

Though these menaces were directed against the State government, Congress felt itself outraged by being thus surrounded and blockaded for several hours by an armed soldiery. Fearing lest the State of Pennsylvania might not be able to furnish adequate protection, it adjourned

to meet within a few days at Princeton; sending information, in the meantime, to Washington of this mutinous outbreak.

The latter immediately detached General Howe with fifteen hundred men to quell the mutiny and punish the offenders; at the same time, in a letter to the President of Congress, he expressed his indignation and distress at seeing a handful of men, "contemptible in numbers and equally so in point of service, and not worthy to be called soldiers," insulting the sovereign authority of the Union, and that of their own State. He vindicated the army at large, however, from the stain the behavior of these men might cast upon it. These were mere recruits, soldiers of a day, who had not borne the heat and burden of the war, and had in reality few hardships to complain of. He contrasted their conduct with that of the soldiers recently furloughed, veterans who had patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold; who had suffered and bled without a murmur, and who had retired in perfect good order to their homes, without a settlement of their accounts or a farthing of money in their pockets. While he gave vent to his indignation and scorn, roused by the "arrogance and folly and wickedness of the mutineers," he declared that he could not sufficiently admire the fidelity, bravery, and patriotism of the rest of the army.

Fortunately, before the troops under General Howe reached Philadelphia, the mutiny had been suppressed without bloodshed. Several of the mutineers were tried

by a court-martial, two were condemned to death, but ultimately pardoned, and four received corporal punishment.

Washington now found his situation at head-quarters irksome; there was little to do, and he was liable to be incessantly teased with applications and demands, which he had neither the means nor power to satisfy. He resolved, therefore, to while away part of the time that must intervene before the arrival of the definitive treaty, by making a tour to the northern and western parts of the State, and visiting the places which had been the theatre of important military transactions. He had another object in view; he desired to facilitate as far as in his power the operations which would be necessary for occupying, as soon as evacuated by British troops, the posts ceded by the treaty of peace.

Governor Clinton accompanied him on the expedition. They set out by water from Newburg, ascended the Hudson to Albany, visited Saratoga and the scene of Burgoyne's surrender, embarked on Lake George, where light boats had been provided for them, traversed that beautiful lake so full of historic interest; proceeded to Ticonderoga and Crown Point; and after reconnoitering those eventful posts, returned to Schenectady, whence they proceeded up the valley of the Mohawk River, "to have a view," writes Washington, "of that tract of country which is so much celebrated for the fertility of its soil and the beauty of its situation." Having reached Fort

Schuyler, formerly Fort Stanwix, they crossed over to Wood Creek, which empties into Oneida Lake, and affords the water communication with Ontario. They then traversed the country to the head of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, and viewed Lake Otsego and the portage between that lake and the Mohawk River.

Washington returned to head-quarters at Newburg on the 5th of August, after a tour of at least seven hundred and fifty miles, performed in nineteen days, and for the most part on horseback. In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, written two or three months afterwards, and giving a sketch of his tour through what was, as yet, an unstudied wilderness, he writes: "Prompted by these actual observations, I could not help taking a more extensive view of the vast inland navigation of these United States from maps and the information of others; and could not but be struck with the immense extent and importance of it, and with the goodness of that Providence which has dealt its favors to us with so profuse a hand; would to God we may have wisdom enough to improve them. I shall not rest contented till I have explored the western country, and traversed those lines, or a great part of them, which have given bounds to a new empire." The vast advantages of internal communication between the Hudson and the great lakes, which dawned upon Washington's mind in the course of this tour, have since been realized in that grand artery of national wealth, the Erie Canal.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ARMY TO BE DISCHARGED.—PARTING ADDRESS OF WASHINGTON.—EVACUATION OF NEW YORK.—PARTING SCENE OF WASHINGTON WITH HIS OFFICERS AT NEW YORK.—WASHINGTON RESIGNS HIS COMMISSION TO CONGRESS.—RETIRES TO MOUNT VERNON.

BY a proclamation of Congress, dated 18th of October, all officers and soldiers absent on furlough were discharged from further service; and all others who had engaged to serve during the war, were to be discharged from and after the 3d of November. A small force only, composed of those who had enlisted for a definite time, were to be retained in service until the peace establishment should be organized.

In general orders of November 2d, Washington, after adverting to this proclamation, adds: "It only remains for the commander-in-chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the United States, however widely dispersed the individuals who compose them may be, and to bid them an affectionate and a long farewell."

He then goes on to make them one of those paternal addresses which so eminently characterize his relationship

with his army, so different from that of any other commander. He takes a brief view of the glorious struggle from which they had just emerged; the unpromising circumstances under which they had undertaken it, and the signal interposition of Providence in behalf of their feeble condition; the unparalleled perseverance of the American armies for eight long years through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, a perseverance which he justly pronounces to be little short of *a standing miracle.*

Adverting then to the enlarged prospects of happiness opened by the confirmation of national independence and sovereignty, and the ample and profitable employments held out in a Republic so happily circumstanced, he exhorts them to maintain the strongest attachment to THE UNION, and to carry with them into civil society the most conciliatory dispositions; proving themselves not less virtuous and useful as citizens, than they had been victorious as soldiers; feeling assured that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry would not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field.

After a warm expression of thanks to the officers and men for the assistance he had received from every class, and in every instance, he adds:

"To the various branches of the army the general takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his invariable attachment and friendship. He wishes more

than bare professions were in his power; that he was really able to be useful to them all in future life. He flatters himself, however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him has been done.

"And being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favors, both here and hereafter, attend those who, under the Divine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others. With these wishes, and this benediction, the commander-in-chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed for ever."

There was a straightforward simplicity in Washington's addresses to his army; they were so void of tumid phrases or rhetorical embellishments; the counsels given in them were so sound and practicable; the feelings expressed in them so kind and benevolent, and so perfectly in accordance with his character and conduct, that they always had an irresistible effect on the rudest and roughest hearts.

A person who was present at the breaking up of the army, and whom we have had frequent occasion to cite,

observes, on the conduct of the troops, "The advice of their beloved commander-in-chief, and the resolves of Congress to pay and compensate them in such manner as the ability of the United States would permit, operated to keep them quiet and prevent tumult, but no description would be adequate to the painful circumstances of the parting scene." "Both officers and soldiers, long unaccustomed to the affairs of private life, turned loose on the world to starve, and to become the prey to vulture speculators. Never can that melancholy day be forgotten when friends, companions for seven long years in joy and in sorrow, were torn asunder without the hope of ever meeting again, and with prospects of a miserable subsistence in future." *

Notwithstanding every exertion had been made for the evacuation of New York, such was the number of persons and the quantity of effects of all kinds to be conveyed away, that the month of November was far advanced before it could be completed. Sir Guy Carleton had given notice to Washington of the time he supposed the different posts would be vacated, that the Americans might be prepared to take possession of them. In consequence of this notice, General George Clinton, at that time Governor of New York, had summoned the members of the State council to convene at East Chester on the 21st of November, for the purpose of establishing civil govern-

* Thacher, p. 421.

ment in the districts hitherto occupied by the British; and a detachment of troops was marched from West Point to be ready to take possession of the posts as they were vacated.

On the 21st the British troops were drawn in from the oft-disputed post of King's Bridge and from M'Gowan's Pass, also from the various posts on the eastern part of Long Island. Paulus Hook was relinquished on the following day, and the afternoon of the 25th of November was appointed by Sir Guy for the evacuation of the city and the opposite village of Brooklyn.

Washington, in the meantime, had taken his station at Harlem, accompanied by Governor Clinton, who in virtue of his office, was to take charge of the city. They found there General Knox with the detachment from West Point. Sir Guy Carleton had intimated a wish that Washington would be at hand to take immediate possession of the city, and prevent all outrage, as he had been informed of a plot to plunder the place whenever the king's troops should be withdrawn. He had engaged, also, that the guards of the redoubts on the East River, covering the upper part of the town, should be the first to be withdrawn, and that an officer should be sent to give Washington's advanced guard information of their retiring.

Although Washington doubted the existence of any such plot as that which had been reported to the British commander, yet he took precautions accordingly. On the morning of the 25th the American troops, composed

of dragoons, light infantry and artillery, moved from Harlem to the Bowery at the upper part of the city. There they remained until the troops in that quarter were withdrawn, when they marched into the city and took possession, the British embarking from the lower parts.

A formal entry then took place of the military and civil authorities. General Washington and Governor Clinton, with their suites, on horseback, led the procession, escorted by a troop of Westchester cavalry. Then came the lieutenant-governor and members of the council, General Knox and the officers of the army, the speaker of the Assembly, and a large number of citizens on horseback and on foot.

An American lady, who was at that time very young and had resided during the latter part of the war in the city, has given us an account of the striking contrast between the American and British troops. "We had been accustomed for a long time," said she, "to military display in all the finish and finery of garrison life; the troops just leaving us were as if equipped for show, and with their scarlet uniforms and burnished arms, made a brilliant display; the troops that marched in, on the contrary, were ill-clad and weather-beaten, and made a forlorn appearance; but then they were *our* troops, and as I looked at them, and thought upon all they had done and suffered for us, my heart and my eyes were full, and I admired and gloried in them the more, because they were weather-beaten and forlorn."

The city was now a scene of public festivity and rejoicing. The governor gave banquets to the French ambassador, the commander-in-chief, the military and civil officers, and a large number of the most eminent citizens, and at night the public were entertained by splendid fireworks.

In the course of a few days Washington prepared to depart for Annapolis, where Congress was assembling, with the intention of asking leave to resign his command. A barge was in waiting about noon on the 4th of December at Whitehall Ferry to convey him across the Hudson to Paulus Hook. The principal officers of the army assembled at Fraunces' Tavern in the neighborhood of the ferry, to take a final leave of him. On entering the room, and finding himself surrounded by his old companions in arms, who had shared with him so many scenes of hardship, difficulty, and danger, his agitated feelings overcame his usual self-command. Filling a glass of wine, and turning upon them his benignant but saddened countenance, "With a heart full of love and gratitude," said he, "I now take leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

Having drunk this farewell benediction, he added with emotion, "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand."

General Knox, who was nearest, was the first to advance. Washington, affected even to tears, grasped his hand and gave him a brother's embrace. In the same affectionate manner he took leave severally of the rest. Not a word was spoken. The deep feeling and manly tenderness of these veterans in the parting moment could find no utterance in words. Silent and solemn they followed their loved commander as he left the room, passed through a corps of light infantry, and proceeded on foot to Whitehall Ferry. Having entered the barge, he turned to them, took off his hat and waved a silent adieu. They replied in the same manner, and having watched the barge until the intervening point of the Battery shut it from sight, returned, still solemn and silent, to the place where they had assembled.*

On his way to Annapolis, Washington stopped for a few days at Philadelphia, where, with his usual exactness in matters of business, he adjusted with the Comptroller of the Treasury his accounts from the commencement of the war down to the 13th of the actual month of December. These were all in his own handwriting, and kept in the cleanest and most accurate manner, each entry being accompanied by a statement of the occasion and object of the charge.

The gross amount was about fourteen thousand five hundred pounds sterling; in which were included

* Marshall's *Life of Washington.*

moneys expended for secret intelligence and service, and in various incidental charges. All this, it must be noted, was an account of money actually expended in the progress of the war; not for arrearage of pay; for it will be recollected Washington accepted no pay. Indeed, on the final adjustment of his accounts, he found himself a considerable loser, having frequently, in the hurry of business, neglected to credit himself with sums drawn from his private purse in moments of exigency.

The schedule of his public account furnishes not the least among the many noble and impressive lessons taught by his character and example. It stands a touchstone of honesty in office, and a lasting rebuke on that lavish expenditure of the public money, too often heedlessly, if not willfully, indulged by military commanders.

In passing through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, the scenes of his anxious and precarious campaigns, Washington was everywhere hailed with enthusiasm by the people, and greeted with addresses by legislative assemblies and learned and religious institutions. He accepted them all with that modesty inherent in his nature; little thinking that this present popularity was but the early outbreaking of a fame, that was to go on widening and deepening from generation to generation, and extending over the whole civilized world.

Being arrived at Annapolis, he addressed a letter to the President of Congress on the 20th of December, requesting to know in what manner it would be most

proper to offer his resignation; whether in writing or at an audience. The latter mode was adopted, and the Hall of Congress appointed for the ceremonial.

A letter from Washington to the Baron Steuben, written on the 23d, concludes as follows: "This is the last letter I shall write while I continue in the service of my country. The hour of my resignation is fixed at twelve to-day, after which I shall become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac."

At twelve o'clock the gallery, and a great part of the floor of the Hall of Congress, were filled with ladies, with public functionaries of the state and with general officers. The members of Congress were seated and covered, as representatives of the sovereignty of the union. The gentlemen present as spectators were standing and uncovered.

Washington entered, conducted by the Secretary of Congress, and took his seat in a chair appointed for him. After a brief pause the president (General Mifflin) informed him, that "the United States, in Congress assembled, were prepared to receive his communication."

Washington then rose, and in a dignified and impressive manner, delivered a short address.

"The great events," said he, "on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I now have the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to

claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country."

After expressing his obligations to the army in general, and acknowledging the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the confidential officers who had been attached to his person, and composed his family during the war, and whom he especially recommended to the favor of Congress, he continued,—

"I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God; and those who have the superintendence of them, to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

"Few tragedies ever drew so many tears from so many beautiful eyes," says a writer who was present, "as the moving manner in which his Excellency took his final leave of Congress." *

Having delivered his commission into the hands of the president, the latter, in reply to his address, bore testimony to the patriotism with which he had answered to the call of his country, and defended its invaded rights

* Editor of the *Maryland Gazette.*

before it had formed alliances, and while it was without funds or a government to support him; to the wisdom and fortitude with which he had conducted the great military contest, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes. "You retire," added he, "from the theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow-citizens; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command; it will continue to animate remotest ages."

The very next morning Washington left Annapolis, and hastened to his beloved Mount Vernon, where he arrived the same day, on Christmas-eve, in a frame of mind suited to enjoy the sacred and genial festival.

"The scene is at last closed," said he in a letter to Governor Clinton; "I feel myself eased of a load of public care. I hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON.—A SOLDIER'S REPOSE.—PLANS OF DOMESTIC LIFE.—KIND OFFER OF THE COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA.—HISTORICAL APPLICATIONS.—NEWS OF JACOB VAN BRAAM.—OPENING OF SPRING.—AGRICULTURAL LIFE RESUMED.—RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FAIRFAXES.—MEETING OF THE ORDER OF CINCINNATI.—TOUR OF WASHINGTON AND DR. CRAIK TO THE WEST.—IDEAS OF INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT.—PARTING WITH LAFAYETTE.

FOR some time after his return to Mount Vernon, Washington was in a manner locked up by the ice and snow of an uncommonly rigorous winter, so that social intercourse was interrupted, and he could not even pay a visit of duty and affection to his aged mother at Fredericksburg. But it was enough for him at present that he was at length at home at Mount Vernon. Yet the habitudes of the camp still haunted him; he could hardly realize that he was free from military duties; on waking in the morning he almost expected to hear the drum going its stirring rounds and beating the reveillé.

"Strange as it may seem," writes he to General Knox, "it is nevertheless true, that it was not until very lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating

as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, nor had anything to do with public transactions. I feel now, however, as I conceive a weary traveller must do, who, after treading many a weary step, with a heavy burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing, with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

And in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Free from the bustle of a camp and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries—as if this globe was insufficient for us all; and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being

the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life until I sleep with my fathers."

And subsequently, in a letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, inviting her to America to see the country, "young, rude, and uncultivated as it is," for the liberties of which her husband had fought, bled, and acquired much glory, and where everybody admired and loved him, he adds: "I am now enjoying domestic ease under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, in a small villa, with the implements of husbandry and lambkins about me. . . . . Come, then, let me entreat you, and call my cottage your own; for your doors do not open to you with more readiness than mine would. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet with rustic civility ; and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court when you return to Versailles."

During the winter storms, he anticipates the time when the return of the sun will enable him to welcome his friends and companions in arms to partake of his hospitality; and lays down his unpretending plan of receiving the curious visitors who are likely to throng in upon him. "My manner of living," writes he to a friend, "is plain, and I do not mean to be put out of it. A glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready; and such as will be content to partake of them, are always welcome. Those who expect more will be disappointed."

Some degree of economy was necessary, for his financial concerns had suffered during the war, and the products of his estate had fallen off during his long absence.

In the meantime the supreme council of Pennsylvania, properly appreciating the disinterestedness of his conduct, and aware that popular love and popular curiosity would attract crowds of visitors to Mount Vernon, and subject him to extraordinary expenses, had instructed their delegates in Congress to call the attention of that body to these circumstances, with a view to produce some national reward for his eminent services. Before acting upon these instructions, the delegates were directed to send a copy of them to Washington for his approbation.

He received the document while buried in accounts and calculations, and when, had he been of mercenary disposition, the offered intervention in his favor would have seemed most seasonable; but he at once most gratefully and respectfully declined it, jealously maintaining the satisfaction of having served his country at the sacrifice of his private interests.

Applications began to be made to him by persons desirous of writing the history of the Revolution, for access to the public papers in his possession. He excused himself from submitting to their inspection those relative to the occurrences and transactions of his late command, until Congress should see fit to open their archives to the historian.

His old friend, Dr. Craik, made a similar application

to Washington in behalf of a person who purposed to write his memoirs. He replied, that any memoir of his life distinct and unconnected with the general history of the war, would rather hurt his feelings than flatter his pride, while he could not furnish the papers and information connected with it without subjecting himself to the imputation of vanity, adding: "I had rather leave it to posterity to think and say what they please of me, than, by any act of mine, to have vanity or ostentation imputed to me."

It was a curious circumstance, that scarce had Washington retired from the bustle of arms and hung up his sword at Mount Vernon, when he received a letter from the worthy who had first taught him the use of that sword in these very halls. In a word, Jacob Van Braam, his early teacher of the sword exercise, his fellow-campaigner and unlucky interpreter in the affair of the Great Meadows, turned up once more. His letter gave a glance over the current of his life. It would appear that after the close of the French war, he had been allowed half pay in consideration of his services and misadventures; and, in process of time, had married, and settled on a farm in Wales with his wife and his wife's mother. He had carried with him to England a strong feeling in favor of America, and on the breaking out of the Revolution had been very free, and, as he seemed to think, eloquent and effective in speaking in all companies and at country meetings against the American war. Suddenly, as if to

stop his mouth, he received orders from Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, to join his regiment (the 60th), in which he was appointed eldest captain in the 3d battalion. In vain he pleaded his rural occupations; his farm cultivated at so much cost, for which he was in debt, and which must go to ruin should he abandon it so abruptly. No excuse was admitted—he must embark and sail for East Florida, or lose his half pay. He accordingly sailed for St. Augustine in the beginning of 1776, with a couple of hundred recruits picked up in London, resolving to sell out of the army on the first opportunity. By a series of cross-purposes he was prevented from doing so until 1779, having in the interim made a campaign in Georgia. "He quitted the service," he adds, "with as much pleasure as ever a young man entered it."

He then returned to England and took up his residence in Devonshire; but his invincible propensity to talk against the ministry made his residence there uncomfortable. His next move, therefore, was to the old fertile province of Orleannois in France, where he was still living near Malesherbes, apparently at his ease, enjoying the friendship of the distinguished personage of that name, and better versed, it is to be hoped in the French language than when he officiated as interpreter in the capitulation at the Great Meadows. The worthy major appeared to contemplate with joy and pride the eminence to which his early pupil in the sword exercise had attained.

"Give me leave, sir, before I conclude," writes he, "to pour out the sentiments of my soul in congratulations for your successes in the American contest; and in wishing you a long life, to enjoy the blessing of a great people whom you have been the chief instrument in freeing from bondage."

So disappears from the scene one of the earliest personages of our history.

As spring advanced, Mount Vernon, as had been anticipated, began to attract numerous visitors. They were received in the frank, unpretending style Washington had determined upon. It was truly edifying to behold how easily and contentedly he subsided from the authoritative commander-in-chief of armies, into the quiet country gentleman. There was nothing awkward or violent in the transition. He seemed to be in his natural element. Mrs. Washington, too, who had presided with quiet dignity at head-quarters, and cheered the wintry gloom of Valley Forge with her presence, presided with equal amenity and grace at the simple board of Mount Vernon. She had a cheerful good sense that always made her an agreeable companion, and was an excellent manager. She has been remarked for an inveterate habit of knitting. It had been acquired, or at least fostered, in the wintry encampments of the Revolution, where she used to set an example to her lady visitors, by diligently plying her needles, knitting stockings for the poor destitute soldiery.

In entering upon the out-door management of his estate, Washington was but doing in person what he had long been doing through others. He had never virtually ceased to be the agriculturist. Throughout all his campaigns he had kept himself informed of the course of rural affairs at Mount Vernon. By means of maps on which every field was laid down and numbered, he was enabled to give directions for their several cultivation, and receive accounts of their several crops. No hurry of affairs prevented a correspondence with his overseer or agent, and he exacted weekly reports. Thus his rural were interwoven with his military cares; the agriculturist was mingled with the soldier; and those strong sympathies with the honest cultivators of the soil, and that paternal care of their interests to be noted throughout his military career, may be ascribed, in a great measure, to the sweetening influences of Mount Vernon. Yet as spring returned, and he resumed his rides about the beautiful neighborhood of this haven of his hopes, he must have been mournfully sensible, now and then, of the changes which time and events had effected there.

The Fairfaxes, the kind friends of his boyhood, and social companions of his riper years, were no longer at hand to share his pleasures and lighten his cares. There were no more hunting dinners at Belvoir. He paid a sad visit to that happy resort of his youth, and contemplated with a mournful eye its charred ruins, and the desolation of its once ornamented grounds. George William Fair-

fax, its former possessor, was in England; his political principles had detained him there during the war and part of his property had been sequestered; still, though an exile, he continued in heart a friend to America, his hand had been open to relieve the distresses of Americans in England, and he kept up a cordial correspondence with Washington.

Old Lord Fairfax, the Nimrod of Greenway Court, Washington's early friend and patron, with whom he had first learned to follow the hounds, had lived on in a green old age at his sylvan retreat in the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah; popular with his neighbors and unmolested by the Whigs, although frank and open in his adherence to Great Britain. He had attained his ninety-second year when tidings of the surrender of Yorktown wounded the national pride of the old cavalier to the quick, and snapped the attenuated thread of his existence.*

* So, at least, records in homely prose and verse a reverend historiographer of Mount Vernon. "When old Lord Fairfax heard that Washington had captured Lord Cornwallis and all his army, he called to his black waiter, 'Come, Joe! carry me to bed, for it is high time for me to die.'"

"Then up rose Joe, all at the word,
And took his master's arm,
And thus to bed he softly led
The lord of Greenway farm.

"There oft he called on Britain's name,
And oft he wept full sore,
Then sighed—thy will, O Lord, be done—
And word spake never more."

See Weems' *Life of Washington.*

The time was now approaching when the first general meeting of the Order of Cincinnati was to be held, and Washington saw with deep concern a popular jealousy awakened concerning it. Judge Burke, of South Carolina, had denounced it in a pamphlet as an attempt to elevate the military above the civil classes, and to institute an order of nobility. The legislature of Massachusetts sounded an alarm that was echoed in Connecticut, and prolonged from State to State. The whole Union was put on its guard against this effort to form a hereditary aristocracy out of the military chiefs and powerful families of the several States.

Washington endeavored to allay this jealousy. In his letters to the presidents of the State societies, notifying the meeting which was to be held in Philadelphia on the 1st of May, he expressed his earnest solicitude that it should be respectable for numbers and abilities, and wise and deliberate in its proceedings, so as to convince the public that the objects of the institution were patriotic and trustworthy.

The society met at the appointed time and place. Washington presided, and by his sagacious counsels effected modifications of its constitution. The hereditary principle, and the power of electing honorary members, were abolished, and it was reduced to the harmless, but highly respectable footing on which it still exists.

In notifying the French military and naval officers included in the society of the changes which had taken

place in its constitution, he expressed his ardent hopes that it would render permanent those friendships and connections which had happily taken root between the officers of the two nations. All clamors against the order now ceased. It became a rallying place for old comrades in arms, and Washington continued to preside over it until his death.

In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, for whom he felt an especial regard, after inviting him to the meeting, he adds: "I will only repeat to you the assurances of my friendship, and of the pleasure I should feel in seeing you in the shade of those trees which my hands have planted; and which, by their rapid growth, at once indicate a knowledge of my declining years, and their disposition to spread their mantles over me, before I go hence to return no more."

On the 17th of August he was gladdened by having the Marquis de Lafayette under his roof, who had recently arrived from France. The marquis passed a fortnight with him, a loved and cherished guest, at the end of which he departed for a time, to be present at the ceremony of a treaty with the Indians.

Washington now prepared for a tour to the west of the Appalachian Mountains, to visit his lands on the Ohio and Kanawha rivers. Dr. Craik, the companion of his various campaigns, and who had accompanied him in 1770 on a similar tour, was to be his fellow-traveller. The way they were to travel may be gathered from

Washington's directions to the doctor: "You will have occasion to take nothing from home but a servant to look after your horses, and such bedding as you may think proper to make use of. I will carry a marquee, some camp utensils, and a few stores. A boat, or some other kind of vessel, will be provided for the voyage down the river, either at my place on the Youghiogheny or Fort Pitt, measures for this purpose having already been taken. A few medicines, and hooks and lines, you may probably want."

This soldier-like tour, made in hardy military style, with tent, pack-horses, and frugal supplies, took him once more among the scenes of his youthful expeditions when a land surveyor in the employ of Lord Fairfax, a leader of Virginia militia, or an aide-de-camp of the unfortunate Braddock. A veteran now in years, and a general renowned in arms, he soberly permitted his steed to pick his way across the mountains by the old military route, still called Braddock's Road, over which he had spurred in the days of youthful ardor. His original intention had been to survey and inspect his lands on the Monongahela River; then to descend the Ohio to the Great Kanawha, where also he had large tracts of wild land. On arriving on the Monongahela, however, he heard such accounts of discontent and irritation among the Indian tribes, that he did not consider it prudent to venture among them. Some of his land on the Monongahela was settled; the rest was in the wilderness, and of

little value in the present unquiet state of the country. He abridged his tour, therefore; proceeded no further west than the Monongahela; ascended that river, and then struck southward through the wild, unsettled regions of the Alleghanies, until he came out into the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton. He returned to Mount Vernon on the 4th of October; having, since the 1st of September, travelled on horseback six hundred and eighty miles, for a great part of the time in wild, mountainous country, where he was obliged to encamp at night. This, like his tour to the northern forts with Governor Clinton, gave proof of his unfailing vigor and activity.

During all this tour he had carefully observed the course and character of the streams flowing from the west into the Ohio, and the distance of their navigable parts from the head navigation of the rivers east of the mountains, with the nearest and best portage between them. For many years he had been convinced of the practicability of an easy and short communication between the Potomac and James rivers, and the waters of the Ohio, and thence on to the great chain of lakes, and of the vast advantages that would result therefrom to the States of Virginia and Maryland. He had even attempted to set a company on foot to undertake at their own expense the opening of such a communication, but the breaking out of the Revolution had put a stop to the enterprise. One object of his recent tour was to make observations and

collect information on the subject; and all that he had seen and heard quickened his solicitude to carry the scheme into effect.

Political as well as commercial interests, he conceived, were involved in the enterprise. He had noticed that the flanks and rear of the United States were possessed by foreign and formidable powers, who might lure the Western people into a trade and alliance with them. The Western States, he observes, stood as it were upon a pivot, so that the touch of a feather might turn them any way. They had looked down the Mississippi and been tempted in that direction by the facilities of sending everything down the stream; whereas they had no means of coming to us but by long land transportations and rugged roads. The jealous and untoward disposition of the Spaniards, it was true, almost barred the use of the Mississippi; but they might change their policy, and invite trade in that direction. The retention by the British government, also, of the posts of Detroit, Niagara, and Oswego, though contrary to the spirit of the treaty, shut up the channel of trade in that quarter. These posts, however, would eventually be given up; and then, he was persuaded, the people of New York would lose no time in removing every obstacle in the way of a water communication; and "I shall be mistaken," said he, "if they do not build vessels for the navigation of the lakes, which will supersede the necessity of coasting on either side."

It behooved Virginia, therefore, to lose no time in availing herself of the present favorable conjuncture to secure a share of western trade by connecting the Potomac and James rivers with the waters beyond the mountains. The industry of the western settlers had hitherto been checked by the want of outlets to their products, owing to the before-mentioned obstacles: "But smooth the road," said he, "and make easy the way for them, and then see what an influx of articles will pour upon us; how amazingly our exports will be increased by them, and how amply all shall be compensated for any trouble and expense we may encounter to effect it."

Such were some of the ideas ably and amply set forth by him in a letter to Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, who, struck with his plan for opening the navigation of the western waters, laid the letter before the State Legislature. The favor with which it was received induced Washington to repair to Richmond and give his personal support to the measure. He arrived there on the 15th of November. On the following morning a committee of five members of the House of Assembly, headed by Patrick Henry, waited on him in behalf of that body, to testify their reverence for his character and affection for his person, and their sense of the proofs given by him, since his return to private life, that no change of situation could turn his thoughts from the welfare of his country. The suggestions of Washington in his letter to the governor, and his representations, during this

visit to Richmond, gave the first impulse to the great system of internal improvements since pursued throughout the United States.

At Richmond he was joined by the Marquis de Lafayette; who since their separation had accompanied the commissioners to Fort Schuyler, and been present at the formation of a treaty with the Indians; after which he had made a tour of the Eastern States, "crowned everywhere," writes Washington, "with wreaths of love and respect." *

They returned together to Mount Vernon, where Lafayette again passed several days, a cherished inmate of the domestic circle.

When his visit was ended, Washington, to defer the parting scene, accompanied him to Annapolis. On returning to Mount Vernon, he wrote a farewell letter to the marquis, bordering more upon the sentimental than almost any other in his multifarious correspondence.

"In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I have travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect, and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you? And though I wished to answer No, my fears answered Yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and

* Letter of Washington to the Marchioness de Lafayette.

found they had long since fled to return no more ; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years climbing, and that, though I was blessed with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the shades, and gave a gloom to the picture, and consequently, to my prospect of ever seeing you again."

CHAPTER XXXV.

SCHEME OF INLAND NAVIGATION.—SHARES OF STOCK OFFERED TO WASHINGTON.—DECLINED.—RURAL IMPROVEMENTS.—THE TAX OF LETTER-WRITING.—THE TAX OF SITTING FOR LIKENESSES.—ORNAMENTAL GARDENING.—MANAGEMENT OF THE ESTATE.—DOMESTIC LIFE.—VISIT OF MR. WATSON.—REVERENTIAL AWE INSPIRED BY WASHINGTON.—IRKSOME TO HIM.—INSTANCES OF HIS FESTIVE GAYETY.—OF HIS LAUGHING.—PASSION FOR HUNTING REVIVED.—DEATH OF GENERAL GREENE.—HIS CHARACTER.—WASHINGTON'S REGRETS AND ENCOMIUMS.—LETTERS TO THE FRENCH NOBLEMEN.

WASHINGTON'S zeal for the public good had now found a new channel; or, rather, his late tours into the interior of the Union had quickened ideas long existing in his mind on the subject of internal navigation. In a letter to Richard Henry Lee, recently chosen President of Congress, he urged it upon his attention; suggesting that the western waters should be explored, their navigable capabilities ascertained, and that a complete map should be made of the country; that in all grants of land by the United States, there should be a reserve made for special sale of all mines, mineral and salt springs; that a medium price should be adopted for the western lands, sufficient to prevent monopoly, but not to discourage useful settlers. He had a salutary

horror of "land jobbers" and "roaming speculators," prowling about the country like wolves; marking and surveying valuable spots to the great disquiet of the Indian tribes. "The spirit of emigration is great," said he; "people have got impatient, and though you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while, and you will not be able to do either."

In the latter part of December he was at Annapolis, at the request of the Assembly of Virginia, to arrange matters with the Assembly of Maryland respecting the communication between the Potomac and the western waters. Through his indefatigable exertions two companies were formed under the patronage of the governments of these States, for opening the navigation of the Potomac and James Rivers, and he was appointed president of both. By a unanimous vote of the Assembly of Virginia, fifty shares in the Potomac, and one hundred in the James River Company, were appropriated for his benefit, to the end that, while the great works he had promoted would remain monuments of his glory, they might also be monuments of the gratitude of his country. The aggregate amount of these shares was about forty thousand dollars

Washington was exceedingly embarrassed by the appropriation. To decline so noble and unequivocal a testimonial of the good opinion and good-will of his countrymen, might be construed into disrespect, yet he wished to be perfectly free to exercise his judgment and express his opinions in the matter, without being liable

to the least suspicion of interested motives. It had been his fixed determination, also, when he surrendered his military command, never to hold any other office under government to which emolument might become a necessary appendage. From this resolution his mind had never swerved.

While, however, he declined to receive the proffered shares for his own benefit, he intimated a disposition to receive them in trust, to be applied to the use of some object or institution of a public nature. His wishes were complied with, and the shares were ultimately appropriated by him to institutions devoted to public education. Yet, though the love for his country would thus interfere with his love for his home, the dream of rural retirement at Mount Vernon still went on.

"The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs," he says, in a letter to a friend in England, "the better I am pleased with them; insomuch that I can nowhere find so much satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. While indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect, how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vainglory that can be acquired from ravaging it by the most uninterrupted career of conquest."

"How pitiful, in the age of reason and religion, is that false ambition which desolates the world with fire and sword for the purpose of conquest and fame, compared to the milder virtues of making our neighbors and our

fellow-men as happy as their frail convictions and perishable natures will permit them to be."

He had a congenial correspondent in his quondam brother-soldier, Governor Clinton of New York, whose spear, like his own, had been turned into a pruning-hook.

"Whenever the season is proper and an opportunity offers," writes he to the governor, "I shall be glad to receive the balsam-trees or others which you may think curious and exotic with us, as I am endeavoring to improve the grounds about my house in this way." He recommends to the governor's care certain grape-vines of the choicest kinds for the table, which an uncle of the Chevalier de Luzerne had engaged to send from France, and which must be about to arrive at New York. He is literally going to sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and devote himself to the quiet pleasures of rural life.

At the opening of the year (1785) the entries in his diary show him diligently employed in preparations to improve his groves and shrubbery. On the 10th of January he notes that the white thorn is full in berry. On the 20th he begins to clear the pinegroves of undergrowth.

In February he transplants ivy under the walls of the garden to which it still clings. In March he is planting hemlock-trees, that most beautiful species of American evergreen, numbers of which had been brought hither from Occoquan. In April he is sowing holly berries in

drills, some adjoining a green-brier hedge on the north side of the garden-gate; others in a semicircle on the lawn. Many of the holly bushes thus produced are still flourishing about the place in full vigor. He had learnt the policy, not sufficiently adopted in our country, of clothing his ornamented grounds as much as possible with evergreens, which resist the rigors of our winter, and keep up a cheering verdure throughout the year. Of the trees fitted for shade in pasture-land he notes the locust, maple, black mulberry, black walnut, black gum, dogwood, and sassafras, none of which, he observes, materially injure the grass beneath them.

Is then for once a soldier's dream realized? Is he in perfect enjoyment of that seclusion from the world and its distractions, which he had so often pictured to himself amid the hardships and turmoils of the camp? Alas, no! The "post," that "herald of a noisy world," invades his quiet and loads his table with letters, until correspondence becomes an intolerable burden.

He looks in despair at the daily accumulating mass of unanswered letters. "Many mistakenly think," writes he, "that I am retired to ease, and to that kind of tranquillity which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been obliged to write so much myself, as I have done since my retirement."*

* Letter to Richard Henry Lee.

Again, "It is not the letters from my friends which give me trouble, or add aught to my perplexity. It is references to old matters, with which I have nothing to do; applications which often cannot be complied with; inquiries which would require the pen of a historian to satisfy; letters of compliment as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the commonplace business which employs my pen and my time often disagreeably. These, with company, deprive me of exercise, and unless I can obtain relief, must be productive of disagreeable consequences."

From much of this drudgery of the pen he was subsequently relieved by Mr. Tobias Lear, a young gentleman of New Hampshire, a graduate of Harvard College, who acted as his private secretary, and at the same time took charge of the instruction of the two children of the late Mr. Parke Custis, whom Washington had adopted.

There was another tax imposed by his celebrity upon his time and patience. Applications were continually made to him to sit for his likeness. The following is his sportive reply to Mr. Francis Hopkinson, who applied in behalf of Mr. Pine:—

"'*In for a penny in for a pound*,' is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the painters' pencil, that I am altogether at their beck, and sit 'like Patience on a monument,' whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof, among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish. At first I was impatient at

the request, and as restive under the operation as a colt is under the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill, than I to the painter's chair. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that I yield a ready obedience to your request, and to the views of Mr. Pine."

It was not long after this that M. Houdon, an artist of great merit, chosen by Mr. Jefferson and Dr. Franklin, arrived from Paris, to make a study of Washington for a statue, for the Legislature of Virginia. He remained a fortnight at Mount Vernon, and having formed his model, took it with him to Paris, where he produced that excellent statue and likeness, to be seen in the State House in Richmond, Virginia.

Being now in some measure relieved from the labors of the pen, Washington had more time to devote to his plan for ornamental cultivation of the grounds about his dwelling.

We find in his diary noted down with curious exactness, each day's labor and the share he took in it; his frequent rides to the Mill Swamp; the Dogue Creek; the "Plantation of the Neck," and other places along the Potomac in quest of young elms, ash-trees, white thorn, crab-apples, maples, mulberries, willows, and lilacs; the winding walks which he lays out, and the trees and shrubs which he plants along them. Now he sows acorns and buck-eye nuts brought by himself from the

Monongahela; now he opens vistas through the Pine Grove, commanding distant views through the woodlands; and now he twines round his columns scarlet honeysuckles, which his gardener tells him will blow all the summer.

His care-worn spirit freshens up in these employments. With him Mount Vernon is a kind of idyl. The transient glow of poetical feeling which once visited his bosom, when in boyhood he rhymed beneath its groves, seems about to return once more; and we please ourselves with noting among the trees set out by him, a group of young horse-chestnuts from Westmoreland, his native county, the haunt of his schoolboy days; which had been sent to him by Colonel Lee (Light-horse Harry), the son of his "lowland beauty."

A diagram of the plan in which he had laid out his grounds, still remains among his papers at Mount Vernon; the places are marked on it for particular trees and shrubs. Some of those trees and shrubs are still to be found in the places thus assigned to them. In the present neglected state of Mount Vernon, its walks are overgrown, and vegetation runs wild; but it is deeply interesting still to find traces of these toils in which Washington delighted, and to know that many of the trees which gave it its present umbrageous beauty were planted by his hand.

The ornamental cultivation of which we have spoken, was confined to the grounds appertaining to what was

called the mansion-house farm; all but his estate included four other farms, lying contiguous, and containing three thousand two hundred and sixty acres; each farm having its bailiff or overseer, with a house for his accommodation, barns and out-houses for the produce, and cabins for the negroes. On a general map of the estate, drawn out by Washington himself, these farms were all laid down accurately and their several fields numbered; he knew the soil and local qualities of each, and regulated the culture of them accordingly.

In addition to these five farms there were several hundred acres of fine woodland, so that the estate presented a beautiful diversity of land and water. In the stables near the mansion-house were the carriage and saddle horses, of which he was very choice; on the four farms there were 54 draft horses, 12 mules, 317 head of black cattle, 360 sheep, and a great number of swine, which last ran at large in the woods.

He now read much on husbandry and gardening, and copied out treatises on those subjects. He corresponded also with the celebrated Arthur Young, from whom he obtained seeds of all kinds, improved ploughs, plans for laying out farm-yards, and advice on various parts of rural economy.

"Agriculture," writes he to him, "has ever been among the most favored of my amusements, though I have never possessed much skill in the art, and nine years' total inattention to it has added nothing to a

knowledge, which is best understood from practice; but with the means you have been so obliging as to furnish me, I shall return to it, though rather late in the day, with more alacrity than ever."

In the management of his estate he was remarkably exact. No negligence on the part of the overseers or those under them was passed unnoticed. He seldom used many words on the subject of his plans; rarely asked advice; but, when once determined, carried them directly and silently into execution; and was not easily dissuaded from a project when once commenced.

We have shown in a former chapter, his mode of apportioning time at Mount Vernon, prior to the Revolution. The same system was, in a great measure, resumed. His active day began sometime before the dawn. Much of his correspondence was despatched before breakfast, which took place at half-past seven. After breakfast he mounted his horse which stood ready at the door, and rode out to different parts of his estate, as he used to do to various parts of the camp, to see that all was right at the outposts, and every one at his duty. At half-past two he dined.

If there was no company he would write until dark, or, if pressed by business, until nine o'clock in the evening, otherwise he read in the evening, or amused himself with a game of whist.

His secretary, Mr. Lear, after two years' residence in the family on the most confidential footing, says, "Gen-

eral Washington is, I believe, the only man of an exalted character who does not lose some part of his respectability by an intimate acquaintance. I have never found a single thing that could lessen my respect for him. A complete knowledge of his honesty, uprightness, and candor in all his private transactions, has sometimes led me to think him more than a man."

The children of Parke Custis formed a lively part of his household. He was fond of children and apt to unbend with them. Miss Custis, recalling in after life the scenes of her childhood, writes, "I have sometimes made him laugh most heartily from sympathy with my joyous and extravagant spirits;" she observes, however, that "he was a silent, thoughtful man. He spoke little generally; never of himself. I never heard him relate a single act of his life during the war. I have often seen him perfectly abstracted, his lips moving; but no sound was perceptible."

An observant traveller, Mr. Elkanah Watson, who visited Mount Vernon in the winter of 1785, bearer of a letter of introduction from General Greene and Colonel Fitzgerald, gives a home picture of Washington in his retirement. Though sure that his credentials would secure him a respectful reception, he says, "I trembled with awe, as I came into the presence of this great man. I found him at table with Mrs. Washington and his private family, and was received in the native dignity, and with that urbanity so peculiarly combined in the charac-

ter of a soldier and an eminent private gentleman. He soon put me at my ease, by unbending in a free and affable conversation.

"The cautious reserve which wisdom and policy dictated, whilst engaged in rearing the glorious fabric of our independence, was evidently the result of consummate prudence and not characteristic of his nature. I observed a peculiarity in his smile, which seemed to illuminate his eye; his whole countenance beamed with intelligence, while it commanded confidence and respect.

"I found him kind and benignant in the domestic circle; revered and beloved by all around him; agreeably social, without ostentation; delighting in anecdote and adventures; without assumption; his domestic arrangements harmonious and systematic. His servants seemed to watch his eye, and to anticipate his every wish; hence a look was equivalent to a command. His servant Billy, the faithful companion of his military career, was always at his side. Smiling content animated and beamed on every countenance in his presence."

In the evening Mr. Watson sat conversing for a full hour with Washington after all the family had retired, expecting, perhaps, to hear him fight over some of his battles; but, if so, he was disappointed, for he observes: "He modestly waived all allusions to the events in which he had acted so glorious and conspicuous a part. Much of his conversation had reference to the interior country, and to the opening of the navigation of the Potomac by

canals and locks, at the Seneca, the Great and Little Falls. His mind appeared to be deeply absorbed by that object, then in earnest contemplation."

Mr. Watson had taken a severe cold in the course of a harsh winter journey, and coughed excessively. Washington pressed him to take some remedies, but he declined. After retiring for the night his coughing increased. "When some time had elapsed," writes he, "the door of my room was gently opened, and, on drawing my bed curtains, I beheld Washington himself, standing at my bedside with a bowl of hot tea in his hand. I was mortified and distressed beyond expression, This little incident, occurring in common life with an ordinary man, would not have been noticed; but as a trait of the benevolence and private virtue of Washington, deserves to be recorded."

The late Bishop White, in subsequent years, speaking of Washington's unassuming manners, observes: "I know no man who so carefully guarded against the discoursing of himself or of his acts, or of anything that pertained to him; and it has occasionally occurred to me when in his company, that, if a stranger to his person were present, he would never have known from anything said by him that he was conscious of having distinguished himself in the eye of the world."

An anecdote is told of Washington's conduct while commander-in-chief, illustrative of his benignant attention to others, and his freedom from all assumption

While the army was encamped at Morristown, he one day attended a religious meeting where divine service was to be celebrated in the open air. A chair had been set out for his use. Just before the service commenced, a woman bearing a child in her arms approached. All the seats were occupied. Washington immediately rose, placed her in the chair which had been assigned to him, and remained standing during the whole service.*

The reverential awe which his deeds and elevated position threw around him was often a source of annoyance to him in private life; especially when he perceived its effect upon the young and gay. We have been told of a case in point, when he made his appearance at a private ball, where all were enjoying themselves with the utmost glee. The moment he entered the room the buoyant mirth was checked; the dance lost its animation; every face was grave; every tongue was silent. He remained for a time, endeavoring to engage in conversation with some of the young people, and to break the spell; finding it in vain, he retired sadly to the company of the elders in an adjoining room, expressing his regret that his presence should operate as such a damper. After a little while light laughter and happy voices again resounded from the ball-room; upon which he rose cautiously, approached on tiptoe the door, which was ajar, and there stood for some time a delighted spectator of the youthful revelry.

* MS. notes of the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle.

Washington in fact, though habitually grave and thoughtful, was of a social disposition, and loved cheerful society. He was fond of the dance, and it was the boast of many ancient dames in our day, who had been belles in the time of the Revolution, that they had danced minuets with him, or had him for a partner in contra-dances. There were balls in camp, in some of the dark times of the Revolution. "We had a little dance at my quarters," writes General Greene from Middlebrook, in March, 1779. "His Excellency and Mrs. Greene danced upwards of three hours without once sitting down. Upon the whole, we had a pretty little frisk." *

A letter of Colonel Tench Tilghman, one of Washington's aides-de-camp, gives an instance of the general's festive gayety, when in the above year the army was cantoned near Morristown. A large company, of which the general and Mrs. Washington, general and Mrs. Greene, and Mr. and Mrs. Olney were part, dined with colonel and Mrs. Biddle. Some little time after the ladies had retired from the table, Mr. Olney followed them into the next room. A clamor was raised against him as a deserter, and it was resolved that a party should be sent to demand him, and that if the ladies refused to give him up, he should be brought by force. Washington humored the joke, and offered to head the party. He led it with great formality to the door of the

* Greene to Col. Wadsworth. MS.

drawing-room, and sent in a summons. The ladies refused to give up the deserter. An attempt was made to capture him. The ladies came to the rescue. There was a mêlée; in the course of which his Excellency seems to have had a passage at arms with Mrs. Olney. The ladies were victorious, as they always ought to be, says the gallant Tilghman.*

More than one instance is told of Washington's being surprised into hearty fits of laughter, even during the war. We have recorded one produced by the sudden appearance of old General Putnam on horseback, with a female prisoner *en croupe*. The following is another which occurred at the camp at Morristown. Washington had purchased a young horse of great spirit and power. A braggadócio of the army, vain of his horsemanship, asked the privilege of breaking it. Washington gave his consent, and with some of his officers attended to see the horse receive his first lesson. After much preparation, the pretender to equitation mounted into the saddle and was making a great display of his science, when the horse suddenly planted his fore feet, threw up his heels,

* This sportive occurrence gave rise to a piece of camp scandal. It was reported at a distance that Mrs. Olney had been in a violent rage, and had told Washington that, "if he did not let go her hand she would tear his eyes out, and that though he was a general, he was but a man."

Mr. Olney wrote to Colonel Tilghman, begging him to refute the scandal. The latter gave a true statement of the affair, declaring that the whole was done in jest, and that in the mock contest Mrs. Olney had made use of no expressions unbecoming a lady of her good breeding, or such as were taken the least amiss by the general.

and gave the unlucky Gambado a somerset over his head. Washington, a thorough horseman, and quick to perceive the ludicrous in these matters, was so convulsed with laughter, that, we are told, the tears ran down his cheeks.*

Still another instance is given, which occurred at the return of peace, when he was sailing in a boat on the Hudson, and was so overcome by the drollery of a story told by Major Fairlie of New York, of facetious memory, that he fell back in the boat in a paroxysm of laughter. In that fit of laughter, it was sagely presumed that he threw off the burden of care which had been weighing down his spirits throughout the war. He certainly relaxed much of his thoughtful gravity of demeanor when he had no longer the anxieties of a general command to harass him. The late Judge Brooke, who had served as an officer in the legion of Light-horse Harry, used to tell of having frequently met Washington on his visits to Fredericksburg after the Revolutionary War, and how "hilarious" the general was on those occasions with "Jack Willis, and other friends of his young days," laughing heartily at the comic songs which were sung at table.

Colonel Henry Lee, too, who used to be a favored guest at Mount Vernon, does not seem to have been much under the influence of that "reverential awe"

* Notes of the Rev. Mr. Tuttle. MS.

which Washington is said to have inspired, if we may judge from the following anecdote. Washington one day at table mentioned his being in want of carriage horses, and asked Lee if he knew where he could get a pair.

"I have a fine pair, general," replied Lee, "but you cannot get them."

"Why not?"

"Because you will never pay more than half price for anything; and I must have full price for my horses."

The bantering reply set Mrs. Washington laughing, and her parrot, perched beside her, joined in the laugh.

NOTE.

Another instance is on record of one of Washington's fits of laughter, which occurred in subsequent years. Judge Marshall and Judge Washington, a relative of the general, were on their way on horseback to visit Mount Vernon, attended by a black servant, who had charge of a large portmanteau containing their clothes. As they passed through a wood on the skirts of the Mount Vernon grounds, they were tempted to make a hasty toilet beneath its shade; being covered with dust from the state of the roads. Dismounting, they threw off their dusty garments, while the servant took down the portmanteau. As he opened it, out flew cakes of windsor soap and fancy articles of all kinds. The man by mistake had changed their portmanteau at the last stopping place for one which resembled it, belonging to a Scotch pedlar. The consternation of the negro, and their own dismantled state, struck them so ludicrously as to produce loud and repeated bursts of laughter. Washington, who happened to be out upon his grounds, was attracted by the noise, and so overcome by the strange plight of his friends, and the whimsicality of the whole scene, that he is said to have actually rolled on the grass with laughter.—See *Life of Judge J. Smith.*

The general took this familiar assault upon his dignity in great good part. "Ah, Lee, you are a funny fellow," said he; "see, that bird is laughing at you." *

Hearty laughter, however, was rare with Washington. The sudden explosions we hear of were the result of some sudden and ludicrous surprise. His general habit was a calm seriousness, easily softening into a benevolent smile.

In some few of his familiar letters, yet preserved, and not relating to business, there is occasionally a vein of pleasantry and even of humor; but almost invariably, they treat of matters of too grave import to admit of anything of the kind. It is to be deeply regretted that most of his family letters have been purposely destroyed.

The passion for hunting had revived with Washington on returning to his old hunting-grounds; but he had no hounds. His kennel had been broken up when he went to the wars, and the dogs given away, and it was not easy to replace them. After a time he received several hounds from France, sent out by Lafayette and other of the French officers, and once more sallied forth to renew his ancient sport. The French hounds, however, proved indifferent; he was out with them repeatedly, putting other hounds with them borrowed from gentlemen of the neighborhood. They improved after a while, but

* Communicated to us in a letter from a son of Colonel Lee.

were never stanch, and caused him frequent disappointments. Probably he was not as stanch himself as formerly; an interval of several years may have blunted his keenness, if we may judge from the following entry in his diary:—

"Out after breakfast with my hounds, found a fox and ran him sometimes hard, and sometimes at cold hunting from 11 till near 2—when I came home and left the huntsmen with them, who followed in the same manner two hours or more, and then took the dogs off without killing."

He appears at one time to have had an idea of stocking part of his estate with deer. In a letter to his friend, George William Fairfax, in England, a letter expressive of kind recollections of former companionship, he says: "Though envy is no part of my composition, yet the picture you have drawn of your present habitation and mode of living, is enough to create a strong desire in me to be a participator of the tranquillity and rural amusements you have described. I am getting into the latter as fast as I can, being determined to make the remainder of my life easy, let the world or the affairs of it go as they may. I am not a little obliged to you for contributing to this, by procuring me a buck and doe of the best English deer; but if you have not already been at this trouble, I would, my good sir, now wish to relieve you from it, as Mr. Ogle of Maryland has been so obliging as to present me six fawns from his park of English deer at Bellair.

With these, and tolerable care, I shall soon have a full stock for my small paddock." *

While Washington was thus calmly enjoying himself, came a letter from Henry Lee, who was now in Congress, conveying a mournful piece of intelligence: "Your friend and second, the patriot and noble Greene, is no more. Universal grief reigns here." Greene died on the 18th of June, at his estate of Mulberry Grove, on Savannah River, presented to him by the State of Georgia. His last illness was brief; caused by a stroke of the sun; he was but forty-four years of age.

The news of his death struck heavily on Washington's heart, to whom, in the most arduous trials of the Revolution, he had been a second self. He had taken Washington as his model, and possessed naturally many of his great qualities. Like him, he was sound in judgment; persevering in the midst of discouragements; calm and self-possessed in time of danger; heedful of the safety of others; heedless of his own. Like him, he was modest and unpretending, and like him he had a perfect command of temper.

He had Washington's habits of early rising, and close and methodical despatch of business, "never suffering the day to crowd upon the morrow." In private intercourse

* George William Fairfax resided in Bath, where he died on the 3d of April, 1787, in the sixty-third year of his age. Though his income was greatly reduced by the confiscation of his property in Virginia, he contributed generously during the Revolutionary War to the relief of American prisoners.—Sparks' *Washington's Writings*, vol. ii. p. 53.

he was frank, noble, candid, and intelligent; in the hurry of business he was free from petulance, and had, we are told, "a winning blandness of manner that won the affections of his officers."

His campaigns in the Carolinas showed him to be a worthy disciple of Washington, keeping the war alive by his own persevering hope and inexhaustible energy, and, as it were, fighting almost without weapons. His great contest of generalship with the veteran Cornwallis, has insured for him a lasting renown.

"He was a great and good man!" was Washington's comprehensive eulogy on him; and in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Greene's death is an event which has given such general concern, and is so much regretted by his numerous friends, that I can scarce persuade myself to touch upon it, even so far as to say that in him you lost a man who affectionately regarded, and was a sincere admirer of you." *

Other deaths pressed upon Washington's sensibility about the same time. That of General McDougall, who had served his country faithfully through the war, and since with equal fidelity in Congress. That, too, of Colonel Tench Tilghman, for a long time one of Washington's aides-de-camp, and "who left," writes he, "as

* We are happy to learn that a complete collection of the correspondence of General Greene is about to be published by his worthy and highly cultivated grandson, George Washington Greene. It is a work that, like Sparks' *Writings of Washington*, should form a part of every American library.

fair a reputation as ever belonged to a human character." "Thus," adds he, "some of the pillars of the Revolution fall. Others are mouldering by insensible degrees. May our country never want props to support the glorious fabric!"

In his correspondence about this time with several of the French noblemen who had been his associates in arms, his letters breathe the spirit of peace which was natural to him; for war with him had only been a matter of patriotism and public duty.

To the Marquis de la Rouerie, who had so bravely but modestly fought under the title of Colonel Armand, he writes: "I never expect to draw my sword again. I can scarcely conceive the cause that would induce me to do it. My time is now occupied by rural amusements, in which I have great satisfaction; and my first wish is (although it is against the profession of arms, and would clip the wings of some of our young soldiers who are soaring after glory) to see the whole world in peace, and the inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind."

So, also, in a letter to Count Rochambeau, dated July 31st, 1786: "It must give pleasure," writes he, "to the friends of humanity, even in this distant section of the globe, to find that the clouds which threatened to burst in a storm of war on Europe, have dissipated, and left a still brighter horizon. . . . . As the rage of con-

quest, which in times of barbarity stimulated nations to blood, has in a great measure ceased; as the objects which formerly gave birth to wars are daily diminishing; and as mankind are becoming more enlightened and humanized, I cannot but flatter myself with the pleasing prospect, that a more liberal policy and more pacific systems will take place amongst them. To indulge this idea affords a soothing consolation to a philanthropic mind; insomuch that, although it should be found an illusion, one would hardly wish to be divested of an error so grateful in itself and so innocent in its consequences."

And in another letter, "It is thus, you see, my dear Count, in retirement upon my farm I speculate upon the fate of nations, amusing myself with innocent reveries that mankind will one day grow happier and better."

How easily may the wisest of men be deceived in their speculations as to the future, especially when founded on the idea of the perfectibility of human nature. These halcyon dreams of universal peace were indulged on the very eve, as it were, of the French Revolution, which was to deluge the world in blood, and when the rage for conquest was to have unbounded scope under the belligerent sway of Napoleon.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WASHINGTON DOUBTS THE SOLIDITY OF THE CONFEDERATION.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH JOHN JAY ON THE SUBJECT.—PLAN OF A CONVENTION OF ALL THE STATES TO REVISE THE FEDERAL SYSTEM.—WASHINGTON HEADS THE VIRGINIA DELEGATION.—INSURRECTION IN MASSACHUSETTS.—THE CONVENTION.—A FEDERAL CONSTITUTION ORGANIZED.—RATIFIED.

FROM his quiet retreat at Mount Vernon, Washington, though ostensibly withdrawn from public affairs, was watching with intense solicitude the working together of the several parts in the great political confederacy; anxious to know whether the thirteen distinct States, under the present organization, could form a sufficiently efficient general government. He was daily becoming more and more doubtful of the solidity of the fabric he had assisted to raise. The form of confederation which had bound the States together and met the public exigencies during the Revolution, when there was a pressure of external danger, was daily proving more and more incompetent to the purposes of a national government. Congress had devised a system of credit to provide for the national expenditure and the extinction of the national debts, which amounted to something more

than forty millions of dollars. The system experienced neglect from some States and opposition from others; each consulting its local interests and prejudices, instead of the interests and obligations of the whole. In like manner treaty stipulations, which bound the good faith of the whole, were slighted, if not violated by individual States, apparently unconscious that they must each share in the discredit thus brought upon the national name.

In a letter to James Warren, who had formerly been president of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, Washington writes: "The confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance, and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to. To me it is a solecism in politics; indeed it is one of the most extraordinary things in nature, that we should confederate as a nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation (who are creatures of our own making, appointed for a limited and short duration, and who are amenable for every action and may be recalled at any moment, and are subject to all the evils which they may be instrumental in producing) sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood,

we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness." *

Not long previous to the writing of this letter, Washington had been visited at Mount Vernon by commissioners, who had been appointed by the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland to form a compact relative to the navigation of the rivers Potomac and Pocomoke, and of part of the Chesapeake Bay, and who had met at Alexandria for the purpose. During their visit at Mount Vernon, the policy of maintaining a naval force on the Chesapeake, and of establishing a tariff of duties on imports to which the laws of both States should conform, was discussed, and it was agreed that the commissioners should propose to the governments of their respective States the appointment of other commissioners, with powers to make conjoint arrangements for the above purposes; to which the assent of Congress was to be solicited.

The idea of conjoint arrangements between States, thus suggested in the quiet councils of Mount Vernon, was a step in the right direction, and will be found to lead to important results.

From a letter, written two or three months subsequently, we gather some of the ideas on national policy which were occupying Washington's mind. "I have ever been a friend to adequate powers in Congress, with-

* Sparks, ix. 139.

out which it is evident to me, we never shall establish a national character, or be considered as on a respectable footing by the powers of Europe.—We are either a united people under one head and for federal purposes, or we are thirteen independent sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other.—If the former, whatever such a majority of the States as the constitution points out, conceives to be for the benefit of the whole, should in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority.—I can foresee no evil greater than disunion; than those *unreasonable* jealousies (I say unreasonable because I would have a *proper* jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the constitution with impunity) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils for the prevention of real ones." *

An earnest correspondence took place some months subsequently between Washington and the illustrious patriot, John Jay, at that time Secretary of Foreign Affairs, wherein the signs of the times were feelingly discussed.

"Our affairs," writes Jay, "seem to lead to some crisis, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am uneasy and apprehensive, more so than during the war. Then we had a fixed object, and though the means and time of obtaining it were problematical, yet I did firmly

* See Letter to James McHenry. Sparks, ix. 121.

believe that we should ultimately succeed, because I did firmly believe that justice was with us. The case is now altered. We are going and doing wrong, and therefore I look forward to evils and calamities, but without being able to guess at the instrument, nature, or measure of them. . . . . What I most fear is, that the better kind of people, by which I mean the people who are orderly and industrious, who are content with their situations, and not uneasy in their circumstances, will be led by the insecurity of property, the loss of public faith and rectitude, to consider the charms of liberty as imaginary and delusive. A state of uncertainty and fluctuation must disgust and alarm." Washington, in reply, coincided in opinion that public affairs were drawing rapidly to a crisis, and he acknowledged the event to be equally beyond his foresight. "We have errors," said he, "to correct. We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us that men will not adopt and carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation, without lodging, somewhere, a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State governments extends over the several States. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular ab-

surdity and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the people, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents? By the rotation of appointments must they not mingle frequently with the mass of the citizens? Is it not rather to be apprehended, if they were not possessed of the powers before described, that the individual members would be induced to use them, on many occasions, very timidly and inefficaciously, for fear of losing their popularity and future election? We must take human nature as we find it; perfection falls not to the share of mortals.

"What then is to be done? things cannot go on in the same strain forever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with these circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme to another. . . . . I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! What a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems, founded on the basis of equal liberty, are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may

be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

"Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on the sea of troubles.

"Nor could it be expected that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight in the minds of my countrymen. They have been neglected, though given as a last legacy, in a most solemn manner. I then perhaps had some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present."

His anxiety on this subject was quickened by accounts of discontents and commotions in the Eastern States produced by the pressure of the times, the public and private indebtedness, and the imposition of heavy taxes, at a moment of financial embarrassment.

General Knox, now Secretary at War, who had been sent by Congress to Massachusetts to inquire into these troubles, thus writes about the insurgents: "Their creed is, that the property of the United States has been protected from the confiscation of Britain by the joint exertions of *all*, and therefore ought to be *the common property of all*, and he that attempts opposition to this creed is an enemy to equity and justice, and ought to be swept from off the face of the earth." Again, "They are determined to annihilate all debts, public and private, and have

agrarian laws, which are easily effected by the means of unfunded paper, which shall be a tender in all cases whatever."

In reply to Colonel Henry Lee in Congress, who had addressed several letters to him on the subject, Washington writes: "You talk, my good sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found, or, if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for the disorders. *Influence* is not *government*. Let us have a government by which our lives, liberties, and properties will be secured, or let us know the worst at once. There is a call for decision. Know precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them, if possible; or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it at the moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If this is inadequate, *all* will be convinced that the superstructure is bad and wants support. To delay one or other of these expedients, is to exasperate on the one hand, or to give confidence on the other. . . . . Let the reins of government, then, be braced and held with a steady hand, and every violation of the constitution be reprehended. If defective, let it be amended; but not suffered to be trampled upon whilst it has an existence."

A letter to him from his former aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, dated New Haven, November 1st, says: "The troubles in Massachusetts still continue. Govern-

ment is prostrated in the dust, and it is much to be feared that there is not energy enough in that State to reëstablish the civil powers. The leaders of the mob, whose fortunes and measures are desperate, are strengthening themselves daily; and it is expected that they will soon take possession of the continental magazine at Springfield, in which there are from ten to fifteen thousand stand of arms in excellent order.

"A general want of compliance with the requisitions of Congress for money seems to prognosticate that we are rapidly advancing to a crisis. Congress, I am told, are seriously alarmed, and hardly know which way to turn or what to expect. Indeed, my dear General, nothing but a good Providence can extricate us from the present convulsion.

"In case of civil discord, I have already told you it was seriously my opinion that you could not remain neuter, and that you would be obliged, in self-defense, to take one part or the other, or withdraw from the continent. Your friends are of the same opinion."

Close upon the receipt of this letter, came intelligence that the insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress which had been offered by their General Court, were still acting in open violation of law and government; and that the chief magistrate had been obliged to call upon the militia of the State to support the constitution.

"What, gracious God! is man," writes Washington,

"that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It was but the other day, that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we now live; constitutions of our own choice and making; and now we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable, that I hardly know how to realize it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream."

His letters to Knox show the trouble of his mind. "I feel, my dear General Knox, infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these States. Good God! who, besides a tory, could have foreseen, or a Briton predicted them? I do assure you that, even at this moment, when I reflect upon the present prospect of our affairs, it seems to me to be like the vision of a dream. . . . . After what I have seen, or rather what I have heard, I shall be surprised at nothing; for, if three years since, any person had told me that there would have been such a formidable rebellion as exists at this day against the laws and constitution of our own making, I should have thought him a bedlamite, a fit subject for a mad-house. . . . . In regretting, which I have often done with the keenest sorrow, the death of our much lamented friend, General Greene, I have accompanied it of late with a query, whether he would not have preferred such an exit, to the scenes which, it is more than probable, many of his compatriots may live to bemoan."

To James Madison, also, he writes in the same strain. "How melancholy is the reflection, that in so short a time we should have made such large strides towards fulfilling the predictions of our transatlantic foes. 'Leave them to themselves, and their government will soon dissolve.' Will not the wise and good strive hard to avert this evil? Or will their supineness suffer ignorance and the fine arts of self-interested and designing, disaffected, and desperate characters, to involve this great country in wretchedness and contempt? What stronger evidence can be given of the want of energy in our government than these disorders? If there is not power in it to check them, what security has a man for life, liberty, or property? To you, I am sure I need not add aught on the subject. The consequences of a lax or inefficient government are too obvious to be dwelt upon. Thirteen sovereignties pulling against each other, and all tugging at the federal head, will soon bring ruin on the whole; whereas, a liberal and energetic constitution, well checked and well watched, to prevent encroachments, might restore us to that degree of respectability and consequence to which we had the fairest prospect of attaining."

Thus Washington, even though in retirement, was almost unconsciously exercising a powerful influence on national affairs; no longer the soldier, he was now becoming the statesman. The opinions and counsels given in his letters were widely effective. The leading expedient for federate organization, mooted in his conferences

with the commissioners of Maryland and Virginia, during their visit to Mount Vernon in the previous year, had been extended and ripened in legislative Assemblies, and ended in a plan of a convention composed of delegates from all the States, to meet in Philadelphia for the sole and express purpose of revising the federal system, and correcting its defects; the proceedings of the convention to be subsequently reported to Congress, and the several Legislatures, for approval and confirmation.

Washington was unanimously put at the head of the Virginia delegation; but for some time objected to accept the nomination. He feared to be charged with inconsistency in again appearing in a public situation, after his declared resolution to the contrary. "It will have also," said he, "a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease are so much desired by me, and so essentially necessary."* Beside, he had just avowed his intention of resigning the presidency of the Cincinnati Society, which was to hold its triennial meeting in May, in Philadelphia, and he could not appear at the same time and place on any other occasion, without giving offense to his worthy companions in arms, the late officers in the American army.

These considerations were strenuously combated, for the weight and influence of his name and counsel were felt to be all-important in giving dignity to the delega-

* Letter to Edmund Randolph, governor of Virginia.

tion. Two things contributed to bring him to a favorable decision: First, an insinuation that the opponents of the convention were monarchists, who wished the distractions of the country should continue, until a monarchical government might be resorted to as an ark of safety. The other was the insurrection in Massachusetts.

Having made up his mind to serve as a delegate to the convention, he went into a course of preparatory reading on the history and principles of ancient and modern confederacies. An abstract of the general principles of each, with notes of their vices or defects, exists in his own handwriting, among his papers; though it is doubted by a judicious commentator * whether it was originally drawn up by him, as several works are cited, which are written in languages that he did not understand.

Before the time arrived for the meeting of the convention, which was the second Monday in May, his mind was relieved from one source of poignant solicitude, by learning that the insurrection in Massachusetts had been suppressed with but little bloodshed, and that the principals had fled to Canada. He doubted, however, the policy of the legislature of that State in disfranchising a large number of its citizens for their rebellious conduct; thinking more lenient measures might have produced as good an effect, without entirely alienating the affections

* Mr. Sparks. For this interesting document see *Writings of Washington*, vol. ix. Appendix, No. iv.

of the people from the government; beside depriving some of them of the means of gaining a livelihood.

On the 9th of May, Washington set out in his carriage from Mount Vernon to attend the convention. At Chester, where he arrived on the 13th, he was met by General Mifflin, now speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, Generals Knox and Varnum, Colonel Humphreys, and other personages of note. At Gray's Ferry the city light horse were in attendance, by whom he was escorted into Philadelphia.

It was not until the 25th of May that a sufficient number of delegates were assembled to form a quorum; when they proceeded to organize the body, and by a unanimous vote Washington was called up to the chair as president.

The following anecdote is recorded by Mr. Leigh Pierce, who was a delegate from Georgia. When the convention first opened, there were a number of propositions brought forward as great leading principles of the new government to be established. A copy of them was given to each member with an injunction of profound secrecy. One morning a member, by accident, dropped his copy of the propositions. It was luckily picked up by General Mifflin, and handed to General Washington, who put it in his pocket. After the debates of the day were over, and the question for adjournment was called for, Washington rose, and previous to putting the question, addressed the committee as follows: "Gentlemen,

I am sorry to find that some one member of this body has been so neglectful of the secrets of the convention, as to drop in the State House a copy of their proceedings; which, by accident, was picked up and delivered to me this morning. I must entreat gentlemen to be more careful, lest our transactions get into the newspapers, and disturb the public repose by premature speculations. I know not whose paper it is, but there it is (throwing it down on the table); let him who owns it take it." At the same time he bowed, took his hat, and left the room with a dignity so severe that every person seemed alarmed. "For my part, I was extremely so," adds Mr. Pierce, "for, putting my hand in my pocket, I missed my copy of the same paper; but advancing to the table, my fears soon dissipated. I found it to be in the handwriting of another person."

Mr. Pierce found his copy at his lodgings, in the pocket of a coat which he had changed that morning. No person ever ventured to claim the anonymous paper.

We forbear to go into the voluminous proceedings of this memorable convention, which occupied from four to seven hours each day for four months; and in which every point was the subject of able and scrupulous discussion by the best talent and noblest spirits of the country. Washington felt restrained by his situation as president, from taking a part in the debates, but his well-known opinions influenced the whole. The result was the formation of the constitution of the United States,

which (with some amendments made in after years) still exists.

As the members on the last day of the session were signing the engrossed constitution, Dr. Franklin, looking towards the president's chair, at the back of which a sun was painted, observed to those persons next to him, "I have often and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that sun behind the president, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; at length I have the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun." *

"The business being closed," says Washington in his diary (Sept. 17th), "the members adjourned to the city tavern, dined together, and took a cordial leave of each other. After which I returned to my lodgings, did some business with and received the papers from, the secretary of the convention, and retired to meditate on the momentous work which had been executed."

"It appears to me little short of a miracle," writes he to Lafayette, "that the delegates from so many States, different from each other, as you know, in their manners, circumstances, and prejudices, should unite in forming a system of national government so little liable to well-founded objections. Nor am I such an enthusiastic, partial, or undiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real, though not radical defects.

* *The Madison Papers*, iii. 1624.

With regard to the two great points, the pivots upon which the whole machine must move, my creed is simply, First, that the general government is not invested with more powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good government; and consequently, that no objection ought to be made against the quantity of power delegated to it.

"Secondly, that these powers, as the appointment of all rulers will for ever arise from, and at short, stated intervals recur to, the free suffrages of the people, are so distributed among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches into which the general government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating into a monarchy, an oligarchy, an aristocracy, or any other despotic or oppressive form, so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the people.

"It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed constitution, that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any government hitherto instituted among mortals.

"We are not to expect perfection in this world; but mankind, in modern times, have apparently made some progress in the science of government. Should that which is now offered to the people of America, be found on experiment less perfect than it can be made, a constitutional door is left open for its amelioration."

The constitution thus formed, was forwarded to Con-

gress, and thence transmitted to the State legislatures, each of which submitted it to a State convention composed of delegates chosen for that express purpose by the people. The ratification of the instrument by nine States was necessary to carry it into effect; and as the several State conventions would assemble at different times, nearly a year must elapse before the decisions of the requisite number could be obtained.

During this time, Washington resumed his retired life at Mount Vernon, seldom riding, as he says, beyond the limits of his own farms, but kept informed by his numerous correspondents, such as James Madison, John Jay, and Generals Knox, Lincoln, and Armstrong, of the progress of the constitution through its various ordeals, and of the strenuous opposition which it met with in different quarters, both in debate and through the press. A diversity of opinions and inclinations on the subject had been expected by him. "The various passions and motives by which men are influenced," said he, "are concomitants of fallibility, and ingrafted into our nature." Still he never had a doubt that it would ultimately be adopted; and, in fact, the national decision in its favor was more fully and strongly pronounced than even he had anticipated.

His feelings on learning the result were expressed with that solemn and religious faith in the protection of heaven, manifested by him in all the trials and vicissitudes through which his country had passed. "We

may," said he, "with a kind of pious and grateful exultation, trace the finger of Providence through those dark and mysterious events, which first induced the States to appoint a general convention, and then led them, one after another, by such steps as were best calculated to effect the object, into an adoption of the system recommended by the General Convention; thereby, in all human probability, laying a lasting foundation for tranquillity and happiness, when we had but too much reason to fear that confusion and misery were coming rapidly upon us." *

The testimonials of ratification having been received by Congress from a sufficient number of States, an act was passed by that body on the 13th of September, appointing the first Wednesday in January, 1789, for the people of the United States to choose electors of a President according to the constitution, and the first Wednesday in the month of February following for the electors to meet and make a choice. The meeting of the government was to be on the first Wednesday in March, and in the city of New York.

* Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, 20th July, 1788.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WASHINGTON TALKED OF FOR THE PRESIDENCY.—HIS LETTERS ON THE SUBJECT EXPRESSING HIS RELUCTANCE.—HIS ELECTION.—HIS PROGRESS TO THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.—HIS RECEPTION AT NEW YORK.—THE INAUGURATION.

THE adoption of the Federal Constitution was another epoch in the life of Washington. Before the official forms of an election could be carried into operation, a unanimous sentiment throughout the Union pronounced him the nation's choice to fill the presidential chair. He looked forward to the possibility of his election with characteristic modesty and unfeigned reluctance; as his letters to his confidential friends bear witness. "It has no fascinating allurements for me," writes he to Lafayette. "At my time of life and under my circumstances, the increasing infirmities of nature and the growing love of retirement do not permit me to entertain a wish beyond that of living and dying an honest man on my own farm. Let those follow the pursuits of ambition and fame who have a keener relish for them, or who may have more years in store for the enjoyment."

Colonel Henry Lee had written to him warmly and

eloquently on the subject. "My anxiety is extreme that the new government may have an auspicious beginning. To effect this and to perpetuate a nation formed under your auspices, it is certain that again you will be called forth. The same principles of devotion to the good of mankind which have invariably governed your conduct, will no doubt continue to rule your mind, however opposite their consequences may be to your repose and happiness. If the same success should attend your efforts on this important occasion which has distinguished you hitherto, then to be sure you will have spent a life which Providence rarely, if ever, gave to the lot of one man. It is my belief, it is my anxious hope, that this will be the case."

"The event to which you allude may never happen," replies Washington. "This consideration alone would supersede the expediency of announcing any definite and irrevocable resolution. You are among the small number of those who know my invincible attachment to domestic life, and that my sincerest wish is to continue in the enjoyment of it solely until my final hour. But the world would be neither so well instructed, nor so candidly disposed as to believe me uninfluenced by sinister motives, in case any circumstance should render a deviation from the line of conduct I had prescribed to myself indispensable.

"Should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reasons and opinions

of my friends ; might I not, after the declarations I have made (and Heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart), in the judgment of the impartial world and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, farther, would there not be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now justice to myself, and tranquillity of conscience require, that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good opinion of my fellow-citizens, yet, if I know myself, I would not seek popularity at the expense of one social duty or moral virtue.

"While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country and myself, I should despise all the party clamor and unjust censure, which must be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious, that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude.

"If I declined the task, it would lie upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season

of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet it would be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, nor the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief, that some other person, who had less pretense and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself."

In a letter to Colonel Alexander Hamilton he writes: "In taking a survey of the subject, in whatever point of light I have been able to place it, I have always felt a kind of gloom upon my mind, as often as I have been taught to expect I might, and perhaps must, ere long, be called upon to make a decision. You will, I am well assured, believe the assertion, though I have little expectation it would gain credit from those who are less acquainted with me, that, if I should receive the appointment, and if I should be prevailed upon to accept it, the acceptance would be attended with more diffidence and reluctance than ever I experienced before in my life. It would be, however, with a fixed and sole determination of lending whatever assistance might be in my power to promote the public weal, in hopes that, at a convenient and early period, my services might be dispensed with, and that I might be permitted once more to retire, to pass an unclouded even-

ing, after the stormy day of life, in the bosom of domestic tranquillity."

To Lafayette he declares that his difficulties increase and multiply as he draws toward the period when, according to common belief, it will be necessary for him to give a definitive answer as to the office in question.

"Should circumstances render it in a manner inevitably necessary to be in the affirmative," writes he, "I shall assume the task with the most unfeigned reluctance, and with a real diffidence, for which I shall probably receive no credit from the world. If I know my own heart, nothing short of a conviction of duty will induce me again to take an active part in public affairs; and in that case, if I can form a plan for my own conduct, my endeavors shall be unremittingly exerted, even at the hazard of former fame or present popularity, to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled through want of credit; and to establish a general system of policy, which if pursued will insure permanent felicity to the commonwealth. I think I see a path clear and direct as a ray of light, which leads to the attainment of that object. Nothing but harmony, honesty, industry, and frugality, are necessary to make us a great and happy people. Happily the present posture of affairs, and the prevailing disposition of my countrymen, promise to coöperate in establishing those four great and essential pillars of public felicity."

The election took place at the appointed time, and it

was soon ascertained that Washington was chosen President for the term of four years from the 4th of March. By this time the arguments and entreaties of his friends, and his own convictions of public expediency, had determined him to accept; and he made preparations to depart for the seat of government, as soon as he should receive official notice of his election. Among other duties, he paid a visit to his mother at Fredericksburg; it was a painful, because likely to be a final one, for she was afflicted with a malady which, it was evident, must soon terminate her life. Their parting was affectionate, but solemn; she had always been reserved and moderate in expressing herself in regard to the successes of her son; but it must have been a serene satisfaction at the close of her life to see him elevated by his virtues to the highest honor of his country.

From a delay in forming a quorum of Congress, the votes of the electoral college were not counted until early in April, when they were found to be unanimous in favor of Washington. "The delay," said he, in a letter to General Knox, "may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I tell you (with the *world* it would obtain little credit), that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit, who is going to the place of his execution; so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities, and

inclination, which are necessary to manage the helm. I am sensible that I am embarking the voice of the people, and a good name of my own, on this voyage; but what returns will be made for them, heaven alone can foretell. Integrity and firmness are all I can promise. These, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men; for of the consolations, which are to be derived from these, under any circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

At length, on the 14th of April, he received a letter from the President of Congress, duly notifying him of his election; and he prepared to set out immediately for New York, the seat of government. An entry in his diary, dated the 16th, says, "About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

At the first stage of his journey a trial of his tenderest feelings awaited him in a public dinner given him at Alexandria, by his neighbors and personal friends, among whom he had lived in the constant interchange of kind offices, and who were so aware of the practical beneficence of his private character. A deep feeling of regret mingled with their festivity. The mayor, who presided, and spoke the sentiments of the people of Alexandria,

deplored in his departure the loss of the first and best of their citizens, the ornament of the aged, the model of the young, the improver of their agriculture, the friend of their commerce, the protector of their infant academy, the benefactor of their poor,—but "go," added he, "and make a grateful people happy, who will be doubly grateful when they contemplate this new sacrifice for their interests."

Washington was too deeply affected for many words in reply. "Just after having bade adieu to my domestic connections," said he, "this tender proof of your friendship is but too well calculated to awaken still further my sensibility, and increase my regret at parting from the enjoyments of private life. All that now remains for me is to commit myself and you to the care of that beneficent Being, who, on a former occasion, happily brought us together after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge me. But words fail me. Unutterable sensations must, then, be left to more expressive silence, while from an aching heart I bid all my affectionate friends and kind neighbors farewell!"

His progress to the seat of government was a continual ovation. The ringing of bells and roaring of cannonry proclaimed his course through the country. The old and young, women and children, thronged the highways to bless and welcome him. Deputations of the most respectable inhabitants from the principal places came forth to

meet and escort him. At Baltimore, on his arrival and departure, his carriage was attended by a numerous cavalcade of citizens, and he was saluted by the thunder of artillery.

At the frontier of Pennsylvania he was met by his former companion in arms, Mifflin, now governor of the State, who with Judge Peters and a civil and military escort, was waiting to receive him. Washington had hoped to be spared all military parade, but found it was not to be evaded. At Chester, where he stopped to breakfast, there were preparations for a public entrance into Philadelphia. Cavalry had assembled from the surrounding country; a superb white horse was led out for Washington to mount, and a grand procession set forward, with General St. Clair of Revolutionary notoriety at its head. It gathered numbers as it advanced; passed under triumphal arches entwined with laurel, and entered Philadelphia amid the shouts of the multitude.

A day of public festivity succeeded, ended by a display of fire-works. Washington's reply to the congratulations of the mayor at a great civic banquet, spoke the genuine feelings of his modest nature, amid these testimonials of a world's applause. "When I contemplate the interposition of Providence, as it was visibly manifested in guiding us through the Revolution, in preparing us for the reception of the general government, and in conciliating the good-will of the people of America toward one another after its adoption, I feel myself oppressed

and almost overwhelmed with a sense of divine munificence. I feel that nothing is due to my personal agency in all those wonderful and complicated events, except what can be attributed to an honest zeal for the good of my country."

We question whether any of these testimonials of a nation's gratitude affected Washington more sensibly than those he received at Trenton. It was on a sunny afternoon when he arrived on the banks of the Delaware, where, twelve years before he had crossed in darkness and storm, through clouds of snow and drifts of floating ice, on his daring attempt to strike a blow at a triumphant enemy.

Here at present all was peace and sunshine, the broad river flowed placidly along, and crowds awaited him on the opposite bank, to hail him with love and transport.

We will not dwell on the joyous ceremonials with which he was welcomed, but there was one too peculiar to be omitted. The reader may remember Washington's gloomy night on the banks of the Assunpink, which flows through Trenton; the camp fires of Cornwallis in front of him; the Delaware full of floating ice in the rear; and his sudden resolve on that midnight retreat which turned the fortunes of the campaign. On the bridge crossing that eventful stream, the ladies of Trenton had caused a triumphal arch to be erected. It was entwined with evergreens and laurels, and bore the inscription, "The defender of the mothers will be the protector of the

daughters." At this bridge the matrons of the city were assembled to pay him reverence; and as he passed under the arch, a number of young girls, dressed in white and crowned with garlands, strewed flowers before him, singing an ode expressive of their love and gratitude. Never was ovation more graceful, touching, and sincere; and Washington, tenderly affected, declared that the impression of it on his heart could never be effaced.

His whole progress through New Jersey must have afforded a similar contrast to his weary marchings to and fro, harassed by doubts and perplexities, with bale fires blazing on its hills, instead of festive illuminations, and when the ringing of bells and booming of cannon, now so joyous, were the signals of invasion and maraud.

In respect to his reception at New York, Washington had signified in a letter to Governor Clinton, that none could be so congenial to his feelings as a quiet entry devoid of ceremony; but his modest wishes were not complied with. At Elizabethtown Point, a committee of both Houses of Congress, with various civic functionaries, waited by appointment to receive him. He embarked on board of a splendid barge, constructed for the occasion. It was manned by thirteen branch pilots, masters of vessels, in white uniforms, and commanded by Commodore Nicholson. Other barges, fancifully decorated, followed, having on board the heads of departments and other public officers, and several distinguished citizens. As they passed through the strait between the Jerseys and

Staten Island, called the Kills, other boats decorated with flags fell in their wake, until the whole, forming a nautical procession, swept up the broad and beautiful bay of New York, to the sound of instrumental music. On board of two vessels were parties of ladies and gentlemen who sang congratulatory odes as Washington's barge approached. The ships at anchor in the harbor, dressed in colors, fired salutes as it passed. One alone, the *Galveston*, a Spanish man-of-war, displayed no signs of gratulation, until the barge of the general was nearly abreast, when suddenly, as if by magic, the yards were manned, the ship burst forth, as it were, into a full array of flags and signals, and thundered a salute of thirteen guns.

He approached the landing place of Murray's Wharf, amid the ringing of bells, the roaring of cannonry, and the shouting of multitudes collected on every pier-head. On landing, he was received by Governor Clinton. General Knox, too, who had taken such affectionate leave of him on his retirement from military life, was there to welcome him in his civil capacity. Other of his fellow-soldiers of the Revolution were likewise there, mingled with the civic dignitaries. At this juncture, an officer stepped up and requested Washington's orders, announcing himself as commanding his guard. Washington desired him to proceed according to the directions he might have received in the present arrangements, but that for the future the affection of his fellow-citizens was all the guard he wanted.

Carpets had been spread to a carriage prepared to convey him to his destined residence, but he preferred to walk. He was attended by a long civil and military train. In the streets through which he passed, the houses were decorated with flags, silken banners, garlands of flowers and evergreens, and bore his name in every form of ornament. The streets were crowded with people, so that it was with difficulty a passage could be made by the city officers. Washington frequently bowed to the multitude as he passed, taking off his hat to the ladies, who thronged every window, waving their handkerchiefs, throwing flowers before him, and many of them shedding tears of enthusiasm.

That day he dined with his old friend Governor Clinton, who had invited a numerous company of public functionaries and foreign diplomatists to meet him, and in the evening the city was brilliantly illuminated.

Would the reader know the effect upon Washington's mind of this triumphant entry into New York? It was to depress rather than to excite him. Modestly diffident of his abilities to cope with the new duties on which he was entering, he was overwhelmed by what he regarded as proofs of public expectation. Noting in his diary the events of the day, he writes: "The display of boats which attended and joined us on this occasion, some with vocal and some with instrumental music on board; the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people which rent the skies, as I

passed along the wharves, filled my mind with sensations as painful (considering the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my labors to do good) as they are pleasing."

The inauguration was delayed for several days, in which a question arose as to the form or title by which the President elect was to be addressed; and a committee in both Houses was appointed to report upon the subject. The question was stated without Washington's privity, and contrary to his desire; as he feared that any title might awaken the sensitive jealousy of republicans, at a moment when it was all-important to conciliate public good-will to the new form of government. It was a relief to him, therefore, when it was finally resolved that the address should be simply "the President of the United States," without any addition of title; a judicious form, which has remained to the present day.

The inauguration took place on the 30th of April. At nine o'clock in the morning, there were religious services in all the churches, and prayers put up for the blessing of Heaven on the new government. At twelve o'clock the city troops paraded before Washington's door, and soon after the committees of Congress and heads of departments came in their carriages. At half-past twelve the procession moved forward, preceded by the troops; next came the committees and heads of departments in their carriages; then Washington in a coach of state, his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, and his secretary, Mr.

Lear, in his own carriage. The foreign ministers and a long train of citizens brought up the rear.

About two hundred yards before reaching the hall, Washington and his suite alighted from their carriages, and passed through the troops, who were drawn up on each side, into the hall and senate chamber, where the Vice-President, the Senate and House of Representatives were assembled. The Vice-President, John Adams, recently inaugurated, advanced and conducted Washington to a chair of state at the upper end of the room. A solemn silence prevailed; when the Vice-President rose, and informed him that all things were prepared for him to take the oath of office required by the Constitution.

The oath was to be administered by the Chancellor of the State of New York, in a balcony in front of the senate chamber, and in full view of an immense multitude occupying the street, the windows, and even roofs of the adjacent houses. The balcony formed a kind of open recess, with lofty columns supporting the roof. In the centre was a table with a covering of crimson velvet, upon which lay a superbly bound Bible on a crimson velvet cushion. This was all the paraphernalia for the august scene.

All eyes were fixed upon the balcony, when, at the appointed hour, Washington made his appearance, accompanied by various public functionaries, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives. He was clad in a full suit of dark-brown cloth, of American manufac-

ture, with a steel-hilted dress sword, white silk stockings, and silver shoe buckles. His hair was dressed and powdered in the fashion of the day, and worn in a bag and solitaire.

His entrance on the balcony was hailed by universal shouts. He was evidently moved by this demonstration of public affection. Advancing to the front of the balcony, he laid his hand upon his heart, bowed several times, and then retreated to an arm-chair near the table.

The populace appeared to understand that the scene had overcome him; and were hushed at once into profound silence.

After a few moments Washington rose and again came forward. John Adams, the Vice-President, stood on his right; on his left the chancellor of the State, Robert R. Livingston; somewhat in the rear were Roger Sherman, Alexander Hamilton, Generals Knox, St. Clair, the Baron Steuben and others.

The chancellor advanced to administer the oath prescribed by the Constitution, and Mr. Otis, the secretary of the Senate, held up the Bible on its crimson cushion. The oath was read slowly and distinctly; Washington at the same time laying his hand on the open Bible. When it was concluded, he replied solemnly, "I swear—so help me God!" Mr. Otis would have raised the Bible to his lips, but he bowed down reverently and kissed it.

The chancellor now stepped forward, waved his hand

and exclaimed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!" At this moment a flag was displayed on the cupola of the hall, on which signal there was a general discharge of artillery on the Battery. All the bells of the city rang out a joyful peal, and the multitude rent the air with acclamations.

Washington again bowed to the people and returned into the senate chamber, where he delivered to both houses of Congress, his inaugural address, characterized by his usual modesty, moderation, and good sense, but uttered with a voice deep, slightly tremulous, and so low as to demand close attention in the listeners. After this he proceeded with the whole assemblage on foot to St. Paul's church, where prayers suited to the occasion were read by Dr. Prevost, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York, who had been appointed by the Senate one of the chaplains of Congress. So closed the ceremonies of the inauguration.

The whole day was one of sincere rejoicing, and in the evening there were brilliant illuminations and fire-works.

We have been accustomed to look to Washington's private letters for the sentiments of his heart. Those written to several of his friends immediately after his inauguration, show how little he was excited by his official elevation. "I greatly fear," writes he, "that my countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant,

and I might almost say undue praises, which they are heaping upon me at this moment, into equally extravagant, though I will fondly hope, unmerited censures."

Little was his modest spirit aware that the praises so dubiously received were but the opening notes of a theme that was to increase from age to age, to pervade all lands and endure throughout all generations.

In the volumes here concluded, we have endeavored to narrate faithfully the career of Washington from childhood, through his early surveying expeditions in the wilderness, his diplomatic mission to the French posts on the frontier, his campaigns in the French war, his arduous trials as commander-in-chief, throughout the Revolution, the noble simplicity of his life in retirement, until we have shown him elevated to the presidential chair, by no effort of his own, in a manner against his wishes, by the unanimous vote of a grateful country.

The plan of our work has necessarily carried us widely into the campaigns of the Revolution, even where Washington was not present in person; for his spirit pervaded and directed the whole, and a general knowledge of the whole is necessary to appreciate the sagacity, forecast, enduring fortitude, and comprehensive wisdom with which he conducted it. He himself has signified to one who aspired to write his biography, that any memoirs of

his life, distinct and unconnected with the history of the war, would be unsatisfactory. In treating of the Revolution, we have endeavored to do justice to what we consider its most striking characteristic; the greatness of the object and the scantiness of the means. We have endeavored to keep in view the prevailing poverty of resources, the scandalous neglects, the squalid miseries of all kinds, with which its champions had to contend in their expeditions through trackless wildernesses, or thinly peopled regions; beneath scorching suns or inclement skies; their wintry marches to be traced by bloody footprints on snow and ice; their desolate wintry encampments, rendered still more desolate by nakedness and famine. It was in the patience and fortitude with which these ills were sustained by a half-disciplined yeomanry, voluntary exiles from their homes, destitute of all the "pomp and circumstance" of war to excite them, and animated solely by their patriotism, that we read the noblest and most affecting characteristics of that great struggle for human rights. They do wrong to its moral grandeur, who seek by commonplace exaggeration, to give a melodramatic effect and false glare to its military operations, and to place its greatest triumphs in the conflicts of the field. Lafayette showed a true sense of the nature of the struggle, when Napoleon, accustomed to effect ambitious purposes by hundreds of thousands of troops, and tens of thousands of slain, sneered at the scanty armies of the American Revolution and its

"boasted allies." "Sire," was the admirable and comprehensive reply, "it was the grandest of causes won by skirmishes of sentinels and outposts."

In regard to the character and conduct of Washington, we have endeavored to place his deeds in the clearest light, and left them to speak for themselves, generally avoiding comment or eulogium. We have quoted his own words and writings largely, to explain his feelings and motives, and give the true key to his policy; for never did man leave a more truthful mirror of his heart and mind, and a more thorough exponent of his conduct, than he has left in his copious correspondence. There his character is to be found in all its majestic simplicity, its massive grandeur, and quiet colossal strength. He was no hero of romance; there was nothing of romantic heroism in his nature. As a warrior, he was incapable of fear, but made no merit of defying danger. He fought for a cause, but not for personal renown. Gladly, when he had won the cause, he hung up his sword, never again to take it down. Glory, that blatant word, which haunts some military minds like the bray of the trumpet, formed no part of his aspirations. To act justly was his instinct, to promote the public weal his constant effort, to deserve the "affections of good men" his ambition. With such qualifications for the pure exercise of sound judgment and comprehensive wisdom, he ascended the presidential chair.

There for the present we leave him. So far our work

is complete, comprehending the whole military life of Washington, and his agency in public affairs, up to the formation of our Constitution. How well we have executed it, we leave to the public to determine; hoping to find it, as heretofore, far more easily satisfied with the result of our labors than we are ourselves. Should the measure of health and good spirits, with which a kind Providence has blessed us beyond the usual term of literary labor, be still continued, we may go on, and in another volume give the presidential career and closing life of Washington. In the meantime, having found a resting-place in our task, we stay our hands, lay by our pen, and seek that relaxation and repose which gathering years require.

Sunnyside, 1857. **W. I.**

END OF VOL. IV.

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